THE

PLEASURES

OF

FRIENDSHIP.

A TALE.

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PREFACE.



IN submitting the following pages to the notice of the public, the Author experiences a delicacy of sentiment, that words must fall far short of expressing; being aware, that in so doing, she exposes herself to criticism, and probably to reprehension. She attempts not to pronounce her Work free from error; on the contrary, she feels persuaded that the first attempt of a young and inexperienced female, must be a source from whence the scrutinous reader may draw ample food

for critical remark. Should, however, her feeble efforts be deemed worthy the public regard, she trusts it will be found, that whilst endeavouring to engage and entertain the youthful mind, she has not neglected to enforce the precepts of Religion and Morality. If by such an union she eventually succeeds in the attainment of so great an object, her exertions will be amply repaid in the happiness of knowing that her time has not been vainly or unprofitably employed.

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FRIENDSHIP..

DURING the summer of 1800, I was prevailed on by the entreaties of my family, to commence a tour through Scotland and Wales. On approaching the town of Caermarthen, I was particularly struck with the picturesque situation of an elegant mansion. I expressed my admiration to Mrs. B. who had formerly resided in the neighbourhood; and who informed me that it was Llyndridge.

"What!" exclaimed all my little family in a breath, "Llyndridge, the residence of your amiable friends Mrs. Wallace and Mrs. Mansfield?" "The same, my loves; in that pretty cottage,

situated at a short distance from the house, they resided many years." "I wish, dear mamma," said Augusta, the eldest of Mrs. B's little girls. "that you would indulge us with a relation of their history, it has been a very long promise." "And a promise I intend very shortly to fulfil, my loves," interrupted Mrs. B.; "their misfortunes will be a useful lesson to you all; and if, through the blessing of God, we are permitted to re-visit the peaceful retirement of our happy home, I shall feel much pleasure in gratifying your mutual wishes." "Were not their lives marked by circumstances of a singularly similar nature?" continued Augusta. "By anticipation, my love, we shall lessen the interest the relation will afford; therefore make no enquiries, but at some future period judge for yourself." This slight reproof checked the rising curiosity of Augusta, who felt the propriety of her mother's observation.

Again restored to the quiet scenes of rural tranquillity, this chearful and happy family, being seated at their evening occupations, reminded Mrs. B. of her promise, and claimed its fulfilment. She complied, and commenced the following history.

"The hero of the narrative I am about to relate, was the son of Mr. Edward Wallace, a counsellor of great eminence in the Metropolis. Montague, an only child, was the idol of his parent's heart, whose greatest ambition was to see him a shining literary character. As soon therefore as the boy could lisp his letters, every leisure moment was employed, by this anxious parent, in the cultivation of his son's mind. A keen and lively imagination soon displayed itself, but accompanied by a natural antipathy to study; perseverance however tended greatly to eradicate this sad propensity, and Montague would probably have realized the

most sanguine hopes of his father, had providence been pleased to spare his life; but a violent attack of fever speedily terminated his existence, and deprived Montague, who was then only six years of age, of a tender father, an able counsellor, and a sincere friend. By this sudden and calamitous event, he was left to the entire management of an indulgent mother; whose ill-judged partiality preponderating too forcibly on the susceptible mind of infancy, proved a fatal barrier to instruction, and quickly tended to eradicate those good impressions, which Mr. Wallace had so earnestly endeavoured to implant in the breast of his son. Mrs. Wallace was inconsolable from the loss of her excellent husband, whom she tenderly loved. On Montague she looked as her only consolation; he was petted and humoured in every whim that childish caprice could dictate. Useless were the persuasions of her friends, in en-

deavouring to convince her of the fatal effects her indulgence would eventually produce. She considered all those her enemies, who by any means, either direct, or indirect, attempted to confute her arguments, or call her conduct in question.

"Montague was, in her estimation, a perfect being. She commanded her domestics to indulge their young master in all his youthful caprices, and never to contradict him, under pain of being immediately dismissed their situations. The natural consequences of such an injudicious plan of conduct, were soon displayed in the manners and behaviour of Montague. He was self-willed in the greatest degree. From every individual he expected perfect submission. When offended by his dependants, he exhibited passions the most uncontrolable; in fact, he was a complete little tyrant, and as such

was dreaded by all his mother's household. Thus passed four years, when Mr. Tremanhere, and Mr. Mackintosh, the guardians appointed by Mr. Wallace, to superintend the welfare of his son, thought it their duty to interfere; and notwithstanding the remonstrances of his mother, they resolved upon saving him from the dangerous vortex into which her ill-founded partiality was so rapidly plunging him, and which threatened the destruction of all those seeds and impressions of virtue, that his good father had implanted in his breast. They placed him under the private tuition of Mr. Tennison, a clergyman of exemplary character, firm in the principles of the established religion, and well calculated to superintend the education of such a lad as Montague. He had a son about the same age as our young hero, whose disposition was extremely amiable, and whose pleasing

and attractive manners proved a striking contrast to the self-willed and arbitrary temper of his playfellow.

"This circumstance set Montague's faults in a more conspicuous light than any thing else could possibly have done. A few years however worked a favorable change. As I before observed, his understanding was keen, and knowing that Mr. Tennison would not fail to punish idleness, he dared not indulge in his natural habits, consequently his lessons were generally learnt, and his exercises performed with punctuality.

"Mr. Tennison's penetrating eye, notwithstanding these favorable symptoms, plainly perceived that in the recesses of his pupil's heart, there still lurked some remnants of that inclination to sloth, which had influenced his conduct through life; and much he feared, that when free from the restraint of advice and correction, this evil propensity would break forth with redoubled vio-

lence, and prove a bane to all his future prospects. How true this supposition was a future conversation will explain; but here I will cease awhile, and offer to my dear children a few brief observations on the sin and folly of idleness. Time is one of the choicest gifts of heaven, and accordingly as we, during our sojourn in this world, either abuse or estimate it, so great will be our reward or punishment in the world to come.

"What was the doom denounced by our Saviour on the unjust steward, who hid his master's talent in the ground! 'Go thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed; thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.' Then after having taken the talent and given it unto him that had ten, our Lord pro-

ceeds to express his heavy displeasure, by this direful denunciation, 'And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' How awful a sentence! and how many serious reflections must the preceding history bring to a contemplative mind! Time, my dear children, is given to us, that we may be enabled to improve the talents committed to our care. If then we abuse this precious gift, by wasting it in frivolous and worldly pursuits, what will be the consequence? What will be our eternal fate, if at the terrible day of judgment, when we are called to give an account of our actions to that Almighty Judge, who knows our inmost thoughts, and penetrates into the deepest recesses of the heart? 'When into his glorious presence we shall appear, oh, who shall abide it?' If then either of you ever feel inclined to indulge in idle and vain enjoyments,

and profusely waste the few short years of your earthly pilgrimage in sensual pleasures, listen to this friendly admonition, 'Whatever thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor desire, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest.' Time once past never returns: the moment which is lost is lost for ever.

'When the morning of life is o'er, and the night cometh, repentance will be too late. Instead of being able to look back on a life usefully and virtuously employed, the retrospect will offer nothing but gloomy and sorrowful reflections. Let it therefore be your care 'to lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.'

"But to proceed with my history.—The worthy and respectable divine, with whom we left our young friend,

superintended his education with a father's care: he was warmly interested in the future welfare of his pupil, and with paternal solicitude, dreaded the arrival of that period which would occasion his removal from Edeford, the parochial residence of Mr. Tennison. Edward, his son, also looked forward with feelings of the deepest regret to the end of the year, when Mr. Mackintosh had appointed to remove Montague to town. They had imbibed for each other a fraternal affection, but a separation they knew was unavoidable, and therefore with the fortitude of men they resolved to submit without repining at the painful necessity.

"The morning of the day on which Mr. Mackintosh was expected, Mr. Tennison called Montague into his study, and addressed him in the following words: 'My dear boy,' said he, 'you are now about to leave the humble roof, under which your early ideas were

first brought to expand themselves. Here your judgment has been formed, here your follies have heen corrected, and here have the earnest efforts of true friendship been exerted, to instil into your mind the principles of religion and virtue. I have endeavoured to supply the place of that excellent parent, of which it pleased God to deprive you, and may that God of his infinite mercy grant that my labour has not been in vain. Would I could have retained you with me until you had reached the age of manhood, but that cannot be. You are destined for the law. It was the wish of your father, and if ability alone would suffice, you have talent sufficient to enable you to reach the zenith of literary fame. But, my dear boy, you are inclined to indulge in a fatal error, which if not subdued, will cause you many an unhappy moment. I allude to that prevailing propensity to idleness,

which has displayed itself so often. Check the progress of sloth, as soon as you perceive its approach. It is an evil that will imperceptibly gain an undue influence over your mind. Never remain for a moment unemployed. I do not wish you to tire or harass yourself by too constant an attention to business. The study of the law is, I know, rather irksome, and uninteresting to young students; but, as I before observed, let not a moment be wholly unemployed. Select a few companions of well-cultivated minds, and in social conversation, or in the perusal of some interesting and well-chosen literary work, pass those hours that may be devoted to recreation. Time will not now permit me to represent to you, the innumerable evils that originate from slothful indulgence. It will tend to extinguish all the good qualities of your heart: It will lead you to partake too largely of

those pursuits, that are so eagerly sought after by the dissolute and unprincipled part of mankind. Your unsophisticated heart would shudder, and you would be apt to accuse me of injustice, were I to tell you, that you would be likely to become a participator in the sinful practice of gaming. But believe me, Montague; this, as well as evils of a less nature, is the result of idleness. When tempted by the persuasions of the profligate, to say within yourself, 'Why should I not enter a little into their amusements? surely it will be an innocent gratification, provided I go not too far,' check the bare idea; fly to the privacy of your own apartment; commune with your heart; and stifle not, I beseech you, the warnings of conscience. Listen to the dictates of that friendly monitor, and 'ere it be too late, recal your erring senses. A young and innocent mind is not to be hurried from the paths of virtue to

those of vice, without experiencing some internal stings of remorse; which if attended to, will not unfrequently recall a youug man, from the brink of that precipice on which he was hovering, and bring him back to the paths of duty and honour. Trust not to a broken reed, for we are all weak in ourselves, and without the assistance of God can do nothing. Remember this precept Montague, for believe me, if you regulate your actions by your own judgment, and presumptuously consider it a sufficient guide to direct your steps, in traversing the thorny paths of this world, so surely you will be lost for ever. Think me not harsh or severe. When far separated from the friend of your youth, let busy memory sometimes revert to the precepts that friend inculcated. May God bless and preserve you, is the ardent desire of one of the humblest of his ministers.'

Here Mr. Tennison was so much af-

fected that he could not proceed, but kneeling down, he implored with silent fervency the protection of Providence over his adopted child. Then rising, and placing his hand solemnly on Montague's head, he zealously ejaculated the following prayer. 'Oh, Almighty God, who hast promised to protect the fatherless, stretch over this thy child thy all-protecting arm; shield his tender mind from the dangers and temptations by which he may be assailed; crown, O Lord, my endeavours for his good, by the assistance of thy grace; and let thy merciful presence accompany him through life. I do not ask, O Lord, that he may be exempted from all trial, because thou art the proper judge as to what may promote his spiritual welfare. If it be thy will that he shall drink deeply of the cup of affliction, direct him, O Lord, to kiss the chastening rod; teach him to flee to that Saviour for relief,

who feels for our distresses, and by whose grace, his trials shall bring forth in them the peaceable fruits of righteousness.'

"Then embracing Montague with much affection, he fondly bade him adieu, and hurried into his apartment to calm his agitated spirits, in order to meet Mr. Mackintosh, who was hourly expected. Our little hero was greatly affected; he revered, and tenderly loved Mr. Tennison. The pathetic manner in which he had bade him adieu, struck him forcibly. He fancied he should never see him again: and so firmly had this idea taken hold of him, that he could not divest himself of it. Weeping bitterly, he rested his head upon the table; here he remained until summoned by Edward Tennison to the breakfast room, where Mr. Mackintosh had been some time. This was a new trial, he was to part with his dearest friend, the companion of his childhood. The scene

was truly distressing. At last Montague starting up, exclaimed, 'Do not follow me Edward,' and having apprized Mr. Mackintosh of his readiness to accompany him, he flung himself into the carriage, and buried his face in his hands. Mr. M. followed him, sympathized in his grief, and endeavoured by many kind efforts to give relief to his mind; so that 'ere they reached London, our distressed hero, had, in some measure, recovered his natural gaiety. Mrs. Wallace had for several years resided in Devonshire; and it was agreed that Montague should pay her a visit, 'ere he became settled in Mr. Mackintosh's family. The following day was fixed on for his departure.

"He had not seen his mother of late, her health, which had been gradually declining, prevented her undertaking so long a journey. With an anxious heart, he repaired imme-

diately on his arrival at Exeter, to Walcot Place, situated about a mile from that city. The joy of again clasping in her maternal embrace, the son on whom she doated as fondly as ever, completely overcame Mrs. Wallace, and sinking on the sofa, she burst into a flood of tears. This tender effusion, although calculated to relieve her oppressed heart, alarmed Montague. He had no idea that his mother was so reduced and debilitated as he found her. After she had retired for the night, he called an old and faithful servant to him, of whom he made particular enquiries respecting the state of her health. 'Why, my dear young maseter,' said Franklin, with tears in his eyes, 'missess has long been sinking, and I do think that it was sore cruel of Mr. Tromanere and Mr. Mackintwash to take you away from her; 'twas like as a sword run'd through her heart. Why when poor maseter

died, sure that was a bitter stroke for her, as I know from experence; for I buried my poor Nancy once, and 'tis all as like one thing you know, sur, the lost of a husband and the lost of a wife. When I see'd you going into the carriage, why I did feel so for poor missess, thof 'twas necessary like, but it seemed like rubbing the birds of their young ones. Her appetite fail'd from that time; aye, fine joints of meat would be brought back to the kitchen without a knife having been a neast 'em. I did once takes the liberty to speak and ax the cause of her grief, but she only shook'd her head, and said, 'I never shall be better, Franklin.' Here Montague, finding that Franklin's volubility was not likely to afford him any satisfaction, wished him a good night, and retired to his room, though not to sleep. His mother's indisposition occupied his whole thoughts, and very early in the morning, finding

that she was already awake, he repaired to her room, and affectionately enquired how she found herself? 'Ill, very ill, my love,' she said; then looking earnestly at her son, she emphatically exclaimed, 'Montague, beloved child of thy mother's heart! image of him, whose loss I have never ceased to deplore! I am fast hastening to that bourne, from whence no traveller returns. Earnestly have I prayed that I might be spared once more to bless my child. Heaven has granted my petition, and has mercifully extended to me his compassion, by sending my only earthly comfort to soften the pangs of this bitter separation. My conscience, alas! tells me that I have failed in performing my duty towards you. My ill-founded partiality has been prejudicial, and I think upon the days that are past with feelings of remorse and regret. But, Montague, if you ever feel inclined to return to those

habits of idleness, that I rather encouraged than corrected, think on your dying mother, and for her sake shun the dangerous evil. This is a painful meeting, my beloved boy, but my dissolution has been for a long time gradually approaching. I feel that the period is not far distant which will bereave you of your mother, but grieve not, my child. Trust your faith on the rock of ages! To the mercy of God I trust, to receive and unite me to your dear father; and 'ere long, when this weak and fragile body shall have resigned its breath, may my spirit ascend to those regions of everlasting bliss, where my Redeemer sitteth at the right-hand of God. Montague, the idea that we shall all meet in Heaven, is a soothing palliative to my widowed heart. It divests death of all its terrors. But I perceive I afflict you, my dear boy; exert yourself, I beseech you, to bear what must shortly take place. I am

much worse than yesterday: the change has been sudden, and I must beg of you to send immediately for Mr. Mackintosh; it is absolutely necessary that I settle my worldly affairs without loss of time.' The distressed Montague instantly dismissed a servant for medical advice. He took a hasty breakfast, and then employed himself in addressing Mr. Mackintosh, to whom he explicitly disclosed the state in which his mother was, and begged him to come to her as soon as possible. Having taken these steps he felt more composed. He was not capable of mature reflection, being then only fourteen years old. The grief he had experienced in leaving the Tennisons', the fatigue of his journey, and the distressing state in which he had found his mother, were such a concatenation of melancholy events, as totally incapacitated him for exertion. A ring at the door now announced the welcome

arrival of Mr. Allison the surgeon, to whom Montague spoke very feelingly of his mother's indisposition. Mr. Allison was a highly respectable practitioner, his manners were extremely mild and amiable, and he expressed a hope that he should find his patient better than by Montague's account he was led to expect. Mrs. Wallace's servant now summoned him to attend the invalid. He remained with her a considerable time, leaving Montague in a state bordering on agony. His feelings were ardent in the extreme, and every instant he ran to the door of his mother's apartment, longing, yet dreading, to hear Mr. Allison's opinion. At length a slight noise announced his approach. He flew to meet the doctor, but on seeing him, he felt convinced from the expression of his countenance, that all hope was over. 'Tell me not that my mother is no more!' he wildly exclaimed; 'it is I, yes I,

that have been her murderer! I, that ought rather to have been her hope and consolation! They tore me from her arms! yet ought I not to have resisted so cruel a procedure, knowing how she loved me! yes, surely, child as I was, it was my duty to have rewarded her maternal affection, by devoting my life to her comfort.' 'Pardon me,' interrupted Mr. Allison, 'your fears are groundless, Mr. Wallace. If my looks were overcast with grief or despondency, it was alone occasioned by an affecting conversation that I have just held with your inestimable parent. She lives, and is as well as when you left her, therefore be calm I entreat you, and listen to my candid opinion.

'I certainly find Mrs. Wallace infinitely worse of late; her health has been gradually declining for the last two years. On my first introduction to her, I perceived that some fa-

tent cause produced that constant anguish of mind, which must eventually destroy her, by preying on a constitution naturally weak. She is forcibly struck by the resemblance you bear to your late father, and that, together with the joy of again seeing you, tended, I think, not a little to give excitement to the malady with which she has so long been afflicted. I must of necessity leave you at present; in the mean time, let me beg, as you value your mother's peace of mind, that you will use your utmost endeavours to controul any demonstration of your feelings. Appear calm and composed, particularly in her presence. By giving way to such unavailing sorrow you can effect no good, nay, on the contrary, should any traces of it be perceived by Mrs. Wallace, the consequences would probably be serious, and perhaps fatal; for I need not tell you, that as formerly, you are still

the idol of your mother's heart. Let this consideration therefore influence you to check your emotion, for the knowledge of your distress would, I am confident, sensibly affect her, and produce that nervous irritation so much to be avoided. She should be kept perfectly quiet: I have administered a composing draught to promote sleep, and at my return I hope to find her better; for the present adieu, and pray be composed, and preserve a manly fortitude.' On revisiting his patient, Mr. Allison, according to his wishes, found that the medicine had afforded rest and relief. He then gave some necessary injunctions, and re-joined Montague, with whom he passed the evening in agreeable conversation. At Mrs. Wallace's earnest request, he took up his abode for the night at Walcot Place, and was highly gratified in the morning to find his patient much recovered, and more tranquillized than the day before.

"The succeeding day Mr. Mackintosh arrived. He learned from Mr. Allison, that although better, Mrs. Wallace's indisposition was such as afforded grounds for apprehension. A relapse he considered probable, and therefore requested Mr. Mackintosh to accede to her wishes, in hastening the settlement of her worldly concerns.

'I desire,' said Mrs. Wallace, 'to withdraw my thoughts from the visionary things of this world, and fix them on another and a better.' She bore the exertion with firmness, excepting when Montague's name was mentioned. 'To your care and guidance he was committed by his father, my dear sir,' she said, 'and I heartily thank the Almighty, for his kind protection, in raising him up such a friend and instructor. May he ever merit your support and esteem; may he pass through the vale of life untainted by the pollution of the world.' 'Rest perfectly

satisfied with regard to your son,' replied Mr. Mackintosh; 'believe me, dear madam, I shall always consider Montague as one of my own. Such was the promise I made to my respected friend Wallace, on his death-bed; how I have fulfilled the duty you can yourself determine; and depend on it, while I live, the charge will be held equally sacred.'

"All matters being arranged to the satisfaction of Mrs. Wallace, Mr. Mackintosh left her, and requested Mr. Allison to persuade her to compose herself. This he did, and shortly after left Walcot Place, promising to call early the next day, but he strictly enjoined Montague not to go near his mother that night. The morning produced no material change in Mrs. Wallace, she had slept tolerably well, and fancied herself better. About twelve o'clock, the weather being extremely warm, and feeling

much oppressed, she begged Mr. Allison would permit her to sit up a little; and 'Pray admit Montague,' she said, 'for I have scarcely seen any thing of him.' Although Mr. Allison did not quite approve of an interview, still he felt reluctant in giving a denial, but requesting that he might be present, he went to fetch Montague. The meeting between Mrs. Wallace and her son was productive of no ill effect on the invalid; it was however very easy to perceive that the appearance of Mrs. W. very much agitated the feelings of Montague. His breast seemed to heave under the most tumultuous sensations, although he endeavoured as much as possible to conceal his emotion. Mr. Allison pitying his situation, was about to propose his leaving the apartment, when a sudden faintness exhibited itself in the countenance of Mrs. Wallace, and she sunk back in her chair. Montague with hurry and alarm, ran

with Mr. Allison to her assistance; but all was over! the vital spark was extinct, and nothing but the earthly tenement remained of her who immediately before had been comparatively in a convalescent state.

"Such, my dear children, is the uncertainty of life. Here to-day, and to-morrow no more; we know not that the next moment may not number us with those who are previously departed. Every thing around us, yea, every thing within us, brings this truth more forcibly to our minds: that life is short, 'even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.' I will here draw a veil over the affecting scene that followed this sudden, though I can scarcely say unexpected event. You, my dear loves, are in the happy possession of an affectionate father and mother. Those who have experienced their loss, can alone fully estimate the value of the blessing. You

will all, I think, participate in the distress of poor Montague. It can better be imagined than described; and without particularizing circumstantially, the melancholy duties that devolved on Mr. Allison and Mr. Mackintosh, to perform for the remains of their respected friend, we will follow Montague to London, accompanied by his guardian, in whose family he was now settled as an inmate. Poor old Franklin, too much attached to the family, even to feel happy if separated from the only surviving branch of it, formed also a part of Mr. Mackintosh's establishment.

"Montague in his person was handsome, and the expression of his countenance was particularly pleasing and agreeable. He was tall, and had more the appearance of a young man of twenty, than a lad of fifteen. Contrary to the expectations of Mr. Mackintosh, he pursued his studies with

much ardour, and scrupulously attended to the directions given him, Mr. Tennison's paternal care, and unremitted exertions, having tended greatly to eradicate the evil propensity to which he had been formerly addicted. Time rolled on in rapid succession, and Montague was fast approaching the age of manhood. He was now one-and-twenty. Added to a strikingly fine person, he possessed a well-cultivated mind, and a great flow of elegant language. He was too indolent to exert himself at all times, but when actuated by any stimulus to display his talents, there could not be found a more agreeable or entertaining companion. Mr. Mackintosh, who kept the strictest watch over every action and movement of his ward, could not help observing, that about this period, there was an evident change in his general conduct. He remained much alone; frequently went out with Mr. Fielding,

one of the assistants, and did not return until late in the evening, but still appeared chearful and happy. Although of an age to act and judge for himself, Mr. Mackintosh did not hesitate in embracing the first opportunity, to enquire into the cause that had produced so sudden an intimacy between him. and Mr. Fielding. 'Not that I mean to insinuate that any prejudicial effects will arise from cultivating his acquaintance, far from it; I have a very high esteem for Henry, and admire his character, but from my own observations, I am convinced that some affair is carrying on between you, and I wish to know if Montague considers it necessary to exclude an old and sincere friend from participating in it.' 'I acknowledge myself culpable, my dear sir, in having for a moment acted without first consulting you. Will you devote a few hours to me in your study? I shall be glad to explain the

mystery in which I have been apparently involved, and flatter myself, that by so doing, I shall exculpate myself from all blame, and entitle myself to your pardon.' They accordingly repaired to the library, and Montague thus proceeded: 'I think I have frequently heard you speak of Captain and Mrs. Ludlow, who resided several years in this neighbourhood; probably you recollect them?' 'Indeed I do,' said Mr. Mackintosh; 'and the incidents relative to their death, are too melancholy to be easily erased from my memory. Poor Ludlow, a fine gallant fellow, was killed in battle. His distressed widow survived the intelligence only three days. They left a daughter, and I think Miss Wilmot, a lady who had resided several years with Mrs. Ludlow, adopted her, though it is long since I have heard any thing of her. But my curiosity is raised; how can you possibly have become acquainted with them, and to what does this introduction lead?

'My companion Fielding is related to Miss Wilmot. She is an eccentric character, but nevertheless an excellent woman; indeed her kindness to Miss Ludlow has proved the goodness of her heart. She has been living some years at Sidmouth, for the benefit of the sea air. She led a remarkably secluded life, and so firmly repelled all advances to social intercourse, that in and around the neighbourhood she was universally acknowledged to be a most extraordinary character. At church she was a constant attendant, but on any other day of the week she never exceeded the bounds of her garden and plantation. One of the most striking peculiarities in which she indulged was this:—At the dusk of evening she made a point of visiting the indigent, and relieving their necessities, so that not unfrequently a great part of the night was spent in these nocturnal rambles. Such an uncommon disposition of mind, at first caused no little

surprise among the neighbouring gentry, but who, from custom, at length ceased to wonder; and if strangers were prompted from the beauty of the situation, to enquire who resided in that pretty cottage? the answer generally was, 'Indeed I can give no satisfactory reply to your enquiries; they are most eccentric characters, and neither visit or are visited by any person of consequence. The inhabitants consist of an old maiden lady it is supposed, and her neice, a young pretty looking girl, but a complete exile. Poor wretch! whoever she may be I pity her situation.' Such were the observations made *en passant*, on Miss Wilmot and her young friend, but which they wholly disregarded, being to the opinion of the world perfectly indifferent. About three months since a circumstance occurred relative to one of Miss Wilmot's pensioners, of a very disagreeable nature. 'Ingratitude is a monster disgraceful to

man,' says one of our poets, and indeed the story I am about to relate strengthens the observation—it is a proof of the depravity of human nature, and was the prevailing cause that induced Miss Wilmot to quit Sidmouth. I will give you the particulars, as nearly as possible, in her own words. 'Among the numerous poor families to whom I administered relief, were Richard and Sally Jones. They had a family of six young children; and owing to a paralytic stroke with which the poor man had been attacked, he was unable to labour.

'In consequence of this affliction, they were obliged to sue for parochial relief. The sum allowed was trifling, and inadequate to the wants of the husband alone. Had it not been for my timely assistance, I am confident they must have perished. I became their chief support; and called regularly myself every Tuesday and Friday night, to

give them their weekly allowance. Independently of this, I invariably sent them their Sunday's dinner from my own table: and indeed Emma can confirm me in saying that I did more for that single family, than for all the others together.

'The plan I adopted of visiting the poor at night, was I admit a strange one; still the indulgence of it afforded me pleasure, and I did not see any just cause for depriving myself of so innocent a gratification. It happened that Richard Jones had had another attack, and was so ill, that the medical man whom I employed, expressed little hope of his recovery. About nine o'clock in the evening, I set out for his cottage, accompanied by Emma. It was a cold wintry night, and we had wrapped ourselves in large fur cloaks. On arriving at the door I found it open. For this I could not account, but it enabled me to enter the kitchen unheard. Richard slept in the room

above, from whence proceeded the sound of voices. Knowing however, that he required night attendance, I imagined that his wife had employed a neighbour to relieve her fatigue. I was on the point of ascending the stairs, when Sally Jones arrested my attention, by saying in a whisper, 'Come, make haste, Betty Simkins, or Madam Wilmot will be here.' I looked towards Emma, and perceived that she as well as myself overheard the conversation. I beckoned her to be silent, and to listen to what was going forward. 'Now here's six silver spoons, said Sally Jones, two table cloths, six silver knives and forks, and one dozen table spoons. I took these out of the china closet, where Madam sent me yesterday to fetch some marmalade stuff for Richard; and for fear in the bustle of his death, she should rumage for any thing, do you keep 'em safe till 'tis all over. He can't be long for this

world. I've got many things already, sowed up in the bed-tye, where 'tis sure to be safe; but hush! carry it off, for Richard is waking; and if he should catch a glimpse on't, why he'd sure as life make a stir, he's so conshenshus like; and tell Madam on't as soon as he'd look at her.' 'But suppose,' said Betty, 'that you should be found out?' 'Oh, there's no fear of that—Madam thinks me the honestest creature in the world.'

'I could stay no longer. Shocked and mortified, I returned as quick as possible to my home. My feelings were too much agitated to admit of my forming any plan for detecting this dishonest creature. Such an instance of depravity I had scarcely ever heard: it opened to my view a scene of the basest ingratitude, and I must acknowledge hurt me exceedingly. So much had I done to promote the comfort and happiness of this woman and her family, that the dis-

covery of her perfidy was almost unbearable. A little cool reflection however tended to calm my emotion. In consideration of poor Richard's illness I was unwilling to act precipitately. I could not reconcile the idea of embittering his last moments, by the painful disclosure; and trying as the effort would be, I resolved to conceal my feelings, and behave as usual, until some change had taken place. The next morning terminated the constraint I had imposed on myself. Poor old Richard expired about two hours after I left the cottage, so that at the time this wretched woman ought to have been employed in soothing, by her tender assiduities, the last moments of an expiring husband, she was robbing and plundering the benefactress who had saved her from the pangs of absolute poverty!

'Is it possible, I mentally exclaimed, that any woman's breast can be the depositary of so much vice and per-

fidy! Believe me, Mr. Wallace,' said Miss Wilmot, 'the conviction made me blush for my sex. All passed quietly on till after the funeral of Richard; the expenses of which I defrayed. Had I claimed redress from the hand of justice, in punishing his offending wife, the laws I knew would have condemned her to death, or banished her her country. At this step my heart recoiled—I thought on her six unoffending and fatherless babes. The appeal was too strong for my feelings—I still hesitated; duty called loudly for justice, but compassion petitioned for mercy—and prevailed.

'I resolved to see the woman, and personally accuse her of the theft and fraud she had committed; accordingly Emma and I set out on this unpleasant embassy. I took the precaution of sending my servant to Betty Simkins, there to remain until I called; ordering her not on any consideration, to betray any

knowledge of the affair. I found Sally Jones alone in her apartment, and without any deliberation, I immediately opened the subject. She positively denied the fact; addressed me by the most tender appellations; and entreated me to dismiss from my mind any suspicion of the kind; assuring me that some malicious person had put such a thing in my head, from motives of jealousy. 'Sally,' I said, 'recollect that there is a Power above, who sees the hypocrisy of your vicious heart, and dives into its inmost recesses. Think you that by prevarication, your fault will be repaired? Deliver to me this instant, every article you have purloined from my house, or you shall be tried and punished by the laws of your country.' Although her countenance plainly testified her guilt, still she positively protested her innocence; and I must acknowledge, this hardened insolence betrayed me to say more than I intend-

ed. 'Know,' said I, 'that I was in the act of going up stairs to your dying husband, when you were delivering to Betty Simkins the plate you stole from my china closet. I heard every syllable that passed between you, therefore it is useless to dissimulate. A person now waits at Betty Simkins's. There go you immediately, and deliver the property of which you have robbed me; but first come up stairs, and let me see what is hidden in your bed-tye. Guilt and confusion overwhelmed this wretched woman, on finding that I really had been witness to her proceedings.

'She endeavoured to soften me by tears and entreaties. On her knees she interceded for pardon, with the most abject servility; and besought me to save her from the gallows. She produced from her bed, table linen and towels, in number more than I can at present enumerate. It had always been my custom, to keep by me a large

stock, independent of those in general use. Sally had usually aired these articles two or three times a year; and it was on these occasions she confessed having taken them. To Betty Simkins we then repaired. There I found my servant—I instantly disclosed the object of my visit, though I rather think, that from the confusion which overspread Sally Jones's countenance, she had previously suspected the truth. She offered no resistance, but quietly surrendered to me the key of a box to which she pointed, and told me that in it I should find what I sought. 'I shall be very glad to get rid of it, she said; 'and I'm sure 'twas a long time before Sally could get me to take part in her wickedness, and never shouldn't I have done so, but that her kept on so, and told me how that I should have half the value.

'To be sure I was a fool to listen to her, and as I told her, I thort how that Madam would find her out; for stolen

goods never speeds, as an old saying goes.' 'Nothing Betty,' I said, 'can exculpate either your or Sally's conduct. The assistance you have both received from me, during my residence in this neighbourhood, makes your crime, if possible, more heinous than it otherwise would have been, because to the great sin of stealing, you have added the basest ingratitude. The rigour of the law would immediately condemn you to an ignominious death; and are either of you prepared to enter into the presence of your Maker? Ask your hearts this question, and tell me, do they not answer in the negative? Of you, Betty Simkins, I do not know so much; but as for the criminal by your side, so confident was I that she had my interest at heart, and so little did I doubt her sincerity, that I would unhesitatingly have committed to her care the most valuable articles I possess.'

'A repetition of all that passed would be tiresome and uninteresting,' said Miss Wilmot; 'suffice it to say, that I remained conversing with these wretched women, until I thought I had made some impression on their hearts. I bade them adieu, intending to leave the neighbourhood the following week, and returned to my house, where I fervently offered up a prayer for the salvation of their souls to that God, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live.

'Thus ended Miss Wilmot's history. I will now, my dear sir, proceed to relate the events that have tended to strengthen an intimacy between this family and myself. On my first introduction at Egremont Cottage, I saw, and admired Miss Ludlow. Every succeeding interview has only tended to increase my admiration, and has impressed my heart with sentiments to which I was before a stranger. Added

to an elegant person, she possesses the most fascinating manners. She is highly accomplished. Her mind appears to have been cultivated with the strictest care, aud I am convinced that her heart is the seat of every virtue. You smile at my enthusiasm, but spare me I pray, until you have seen the object that inspires it.' 'The picture you have drawn, dear Montague, indicates an impassioned mind; and the fair damsel that stands conspicuous in the representation, is, I doubt not, in your opinion faultless. But allowing sober reason to be the arbiter of your judgment, tell me have you seen enough of Miss Ludlow, to enable you duly to estimate her character; or is this only a lively effusion, occasioned by one or two casual visits, and perhaps a few hours conversation. If so, let me entreat you, my dear friend, not to be too hasty. A connection that will determine your happiness or misery through life,

ought not to be precipitately formed: first learn to esteem and respect the virtues of the woman you admire, and let your love have for its basis true and unalterable friendship.' 'I admit all you say;' said Montague, 'to be perfectly just and correct. So persuaded am I however, that Miss Ludlow is the woman whom, above all others, you would yourself have selected for my wife, that I will readily promise to forswear for ever the enjoyment of her society, provided my choice meets not the sanction of my best and dearest friend.' 'A thousand thanks, generous Montague, for this proof of your regard. Believe me, I know how to appreciate its value; and as no one in the world dislikes suspense more than I do, pray fix an early day for our visit to Harrow. But, by the bye, how, having been so secluded from the world, has your adorable fair one attained all her acquirements?' 'Miss Wilmot has been her sole instructress.

Emma possesses great natural talents, particularly for drawing, in which branch she greatly excels. Music is also a favourite study. She cannot be termed a first-rate performer, but there is such an indescribable sweetness in her manner of playing, that when accompanied by her voice, she runs over the mellow tones of her harp,

> " That wakes its measures slow and high,
> " Attuned to sacred ministrelsy."

I lose myself in listening to her, and with the same favourite author am ready to exclaim,

> " What melting voice attends the strings,
> " 'Tis Emma! or an Angel sings."

But on this interesting subject I must dwell no longer, not having yet finished the task I have imposed on myself. To a mind such as yours, the details I am going to relate will, I know, be painful; but to proceed, Miss Wilmot

has a brother settled at Southampton. He is of the same profession with ourselves, and has a respectable and extensive practice; but his real character is not I believe generally known.' 'And why is it not?' interrupted Mr. Mackintosh; 'Because under the specious mask of pleasantry and good-nature, is hid one of the blackest and most unfeeling hearts that ever had place in the breast of man.' I know him well, and have been in one instance witness of his perfidy. He is thoroughly initiated into the lowest tricks of his profession, and fails not to practise them, though at the ruin of a fellow-creature. Yes, Montague, I saw that man endeavouring, by all the arts of which he was master, to reduce to beggary an honest individual, by persuading him to commence a law-suit against a wealthy relation, for the recovery of a piece of land, to which he had no more legal right than you or I have. I was staying at Southampton, with a gentleman to

whom this farmer had once been a servant. He came to ask his master's advice. As soon as he had related the circumstances, I was convinced that Mr. Wilmot merited the accusations which at various times I had heard against him. To rescue one individual at least from his sordid grasp I was resolved. I therefore called on him, represented in strong terms the dishonesty of the action, and begged at the same time, to know on what grounds he founded his hopes of success. The question confounded him. To integrity he was a stranger, and he knew not how to confront me. He offered a few pretences for the steps he had taken; and said, 'that having found it impossible to reason the poor man out of the idea, that the land was his own, he had, very reluctantly, engaged to do what he could for him.' This I knew to be a palpable falsehood. No longer able to listen to the conversation

of so despicable a character, I bid him good morning; telling him at the same time, that I doubted not being able to persuade my old friend to study his own advantage, by giving up so chemerical an idea.' 'A characteristic anecdote indeed,' said Montague; 'it corresponds exactly with the circumstance I am going to relate. But is it not astonishing, my dear Sir, that during his long residence in Southampton, nothing should have transpired to disclose the hypocrisy of his heart? His manners certainly are particularly affable; and he has, I believe, numerous friends.

'His family consists of two boys and two girls; for the former he has already provided; for the latter he wishes to secure his sister's property, which being quite at her own disposal, he fears will be given to Miss Ludlow. To conceive the diabolical plan he has adopted, in order to succeed in his intentions, would be impossible. You will

scarcely credit the assertion, but believe me, he is actually endeavouring, by bribery, to procure witnesses to swear to the derangement of his sister's senses.

'Her eccentricities are made a pretence for proving her a maniac; and the circumstance that induced Miss Wilmot to quit Sidmouth, has raised in him the expectation of procuring Sally Jones to aid his designs by false swearing. This woman is happily, however, a very altered character. The last conversation she held with Miss Wilmot, made a great impression on her mind. A violent fit of sickness, in which she sensibly felt the loss of her kind benefactress, has tended to strengthen this good impression; which a letter at present in my possession evidently manifests.

Honoured Miss Ludlow,

I take the liberty to address you, because I am afeard that what I

have got to say will hurt dear Madam's nerves. You will Miss be thunderstroke, to see that I should make so bold, as to write to one who I treated so ill; but, thanks to Almighty God, I do not continue such a vile sinner as I was. I have been afflicted with a long and sore sickness; and first I took it at heart very much, and thort as how my sitivation was very hard to bear with; but now my heart is changed, and I return thanks to God for the timely visitation, as it hath been the means of saving my soul. Since the bitter day that zeed you and dear Madam go away, I have earnestly prayed that God would put me in some way to render you a sarvice—he has granted my petition, and I am thankful. Last Tuesday, a gentleman, if he deserveth the name, come to my house, and ax'd me if I did not think as how Madam Wilmot was' maz'd, when I know'd her. Well thort I to mysel,

this is wonderful strange, and something told me, that very like this man was going to make believe that her was so for to answer some wicked purpose of his own. 'So,' says I, 'why how can you think for to ax me such a question? Why her clothed me and mine, aye, for years; but I ill returned her goodness, and treated a blessed angel, like a vile sinner that I was then, most shameful.' As soon as I had so said, he slipt a half-crown in my hand, and said, 'Well, my good woman, say nothing more about it; I am glad it is not so. I heard it, and having a respect for Miss Wilmot, I wished to assurtain the truth;' and with this he went away like lightning. I did not like the way of the gentleman at all; and I went to the neighbours, and found that he had been to many [illegible], and ax'd the same question.

'Betty Simkins, who is, I am sadly afeard, as wicked as ever, told me as

a great secret, that the gentleman would be the making of her, and all her family, if her would sware to the truth of what he should say. But don't you plase Miss, to say nothing about this, for Betty to hear on't again, because her would kill me, if her thort as how I had told on't, to any living soul; but I am sure that all is not right, or the gentleman, whoever he may be, would not make such promises. If my writing, my dear Miss Ludlow, should help you to find out your hennemy, why I shall be glad shure enuf. I guess that I should know the gentleman again, was I to see un; he was a seemly looking man, and dressed in black.

'I hope as how you, and dear Madam, is well: and that God may bless you both is the arnest prayer of your repentant and dutiful Sarvant,

SALLY JONES.

'P. S. I buried my poor little John last January. All the rest be in fine health—thank God for it.'

'Was there ever, my dear Sir, a more subtle villain,' said Montague, on finishing the letter. 'His plans are I doubt not deeply laid, but whether so or not, this letter is sufficient to prove their existence, and to the last drop of my blood I will avenge the insult offered to the respected friend of Emma Ludlow. Yes, he shall 'ere long be convinced that the laws of his Country are founded on justice; and sincerely do I trust that he will be made to feel their severity. An inhuman monster, he is void of every feeling of humanity! disgraces the sacred name of brother, and——'

'Stop Montague, not too warm; it is useless to waste your time in idle execrations; let us rather deliberate on the most eligible plan of proceeding, in this unpleasant affair. I suppose Miss Wilmot is ignorant of it, is she not?'

'She is perfectly so; and Miss Ludlow entreated me to use my utmost endeavours to keep her so; for her

friend's feelings, she says, are so acute, that such a communication would endanger her life. Spare her the knowledge of it therefore I beseech you.' 'To do this,' replied Mr. Mackintosh, 'we must scrupulously avoid giving publicity to the affair. All must be carried on with the strictest privacy, although I do acknowledge, that it is a duty we owe to society in general, to make Mr. Wilmot a public example. He deserves not the esteem of mankind, because he is destitute of a man's feelings. I will however go to him myself, you shall accompany me. It is the best course we can pursue; and I have no doubt but that the perusal of Sally's letter, will induce him, like a bad general, to decamp with speed, and leave his opponents entire masters of the field. A villain is always a coward, and such depend on it we shall find Mr. Wilmot.

"In pursuance of this arrangement, Mr. Mackintosh and Wallace left town for Southampton, the following morning. They found Mr. Wilmot at home, but being particularly engaged, he requested the gentlemen to honour him with their company on some future day. This they did not think proper to do, and bidding the messenger say they would wait until Mr. Wilmot was disengaged, they were introduced into a large and elegantly furnished drawing-room.

"When alone, Montague smiled, and said, 'He certainly, my dear sir, suspects the subject of our visit, and would doubtless be glad to dispense with our company altogether. It is my opinion he will give us the slip now if possible.' Nor was the conjecture wrong; for after having waited upwards of an hour, one of Mr. Wilmot's clerks appeared, and apologizing for his master's absence, said, that that gentleman had

been suddenly called off to attend the summons of a dying client, from whom he could not be expected to return for some time. 'Then when he does return, have the goodness to tell him, that Mr. Mackintosh intends calling on him precisely at four o'clock, and expects to see him.' So saying, they withdrew, and at their appointed hour repaired again to Prince's Buildings.

"They were admitted and introduced into a room, where sat Mr. Wilmot with his family. He accosted them with civility, and Mrs. Wilmot, whose manners were extremely pleasing, enquired very kindly for her sister-in-law. Not so her husband—he showed visible signs of agitation, and with rather an ill grace, passed the compliment of asking them to dinner. 'My stay here,' said Mr. Mackintosh, will be short; for as the sole cause of my visit concerns you alone, I shall, with

my friend Wallace, leave this for town, as soon as you can make it convenient to devote an hour to me in your study.'

"He immediately arose, and silently led the way. They followed; and the door being closed, Mr. Mackintosh without hesitation opened the subject that led him thither. 'Mr. Wilmot,' said he, 'the affair that calls me here is of a very unpleasant nature: waving all preface and restraint, I will at once come to the point, and explain the cause of my interference.' Mr. Wilmot bowed, and Mr. Mackintosh thus proceeded: 'Your worthy and amiable sister, Sir, you of course know, resides at present at Harrow. My friend, Mr. Wallace, has, through Mr. Fielding, an assistant of mine, and, I believe, a relative of yours, been introduced to her acquaintance. He is on an intimate footing with both her and her amiable young friend Miss Ludlow, whose

peace of mind has been lately much disturbed by some very disagreeable reports, in which it is said you are a party concerned. The accusation however is of so black a nature, and the affair altogether so derogatory to the character of a gentleman, or the feelings of a brother, that, I flatter myself, you will be enabled on its mere mention, to disclaim all knowledge of its existence.' He gave utterance to this hope, though the guilty countenance of Mr. Wilmot confirmed at once what his lips dared not utter. 'You are accused, Sir,' continued he, 'of having endeavoured, by bribery and other wicked means, to procure witnesses, to swear to the derangement of your sister's senses. Let me therefore beg, that without hesitation, you will pronounce yourself either guilty or innocent of this atrocious charge. '

'I certainly, sir, must confess, that I have had great doubt—reason I mean—to doubt—to suspect—I should say,

that Miss Wilmot's mental faculties are impaired. It grieves me, sir, I assure you; but bitter as the con—vic—tion would be, you must acknowledge her eccentricities, (if so they may be called) arise from some cause of the kind. I cannot however comprehend how such a report could have reached Miss Ludlow; surely Sir, you do not imagine that I should have made the affair public?' 'But I do think it, Mr. Wilmot; and my suspicions have received additional confirmation since I entered this room. 'How Sir!—What Sir!' he said, hastily casting an eager glance around, to see if any unlucky paper had been accidentally left about; 'you speak enigmatically; I do not comprehend your meaning; what in this room can possibly have confirmed your unjust suspicions?' 'The object who now stands before me has done so,' said Mr. Mackintosh, looking sternly at him; 'your countenance is an index to a heart,

that is stamped with crimes of the blackest dye.' 'I'll not submit to this insulting language in my own house, depend on it,' said Mr. Wilmot, trembling violently, and he attempted to leave the room; but Montague, apprehensive of his intention, slipped by him, turned the key, took it out and quietly seated himself. 'This, Sir, is my own house,' uttered Mr. Wilmot, in a faltering tone of voice, his whole countenance distorted by rage and fury. 'And to the kind sister, the object of your wicked designs, are you indebted for the possession of it,' said Mr. Mackintosh, still retaining his usual composure. 'Mr. Wilmot, let me assure you, that all attempts at dissimmulation are useless; they only tend to plunge you deeper into that vortex, from which you cannot escape. Villany always, sooner or later, meets its reward. I can this moment produce evidence, so self-sufficient, that were your case to be tried

by any court of criminal jurisprudence, the verdict would be decidedly against you.

'From indisputable authority, I know that at Sidmouth, after having failed in several attempts, you bribed a woman of the name of Betty Simkins, to falsify her oath. You told her, that by doing so, she would be the making of her family. Can you deny this? Can you offer the slightest palliative, by which to shield your name from the ignominy that will ever be attached to it?' Mr. Wilmot uttered not a word: his astonishment at finding himself so completely detected, overwhelmed him with shame and confusion. Mr. Mackintosh continued: 'Your character, Sir, is at stake. One alternative alone remains. Ensure my secresy on the conditions that I shall propose; or consent to be publicly branded as an unprincipled character as long as you live. What is your decision?' 'I am

ready, Sir, to accede to your first proposal; because I trust you will impose no conditions that will place me in so perilous a situation as a public disclosure. The sooner this most unpleasant affair is concluded the better. I wished not to go to such lengths, but you and Mr. Wallace are so very warm. We should be actuated by different feelings indeed gentlemen, when transacting private business.' 'Privacy, sir, would be out of the question,' returned Montague, warmly; and believe me, I would not hesitate to publish your villany to the whole world, were it not in consideration of your sister's feelings. Had it not been for the interposition of an amiable woman, you would long 'ere this have been within the walls of a prison, the fittest place for your reception. There your servility might have been useful, in procuring for you the good will of the gaoler; but to an honourable mind, permit me to tell you, it

is disgusting; therefore use no more of it I beg.' 'May I ask, Sir, to whose kind interposition I am so wonderfully indebted?' 'That person, Sir, is Miss Ludlow. Her unbounded generosity led her to sue for the man who is her greatest enemy. I have long since discovered the main spring of your actions.

'To secure your sister's property for the benefit of yourself and family, is the point at which you aim. You fear that it will be given to her more deserving friend; but know, sir, that *that* friend is superior to the generality of her sex. She possesses too noble a mind to descend to the commission of any paltry action, to promote her own interest. By communicating to your sister the circumstances that have of late transpired, she would have effectually deprived you of the slightest hope of ever attaining your selfish views, and most probably would have secured to

herself, the wealth you so basely covet. But her mind is of too dignified a character to be influenced by the poor meed of earthly riches; she rests not her hopes of happiness on the possession of superfluous wealth; and with that true magnanimity of soul, and generosity of heart, so natural to her, she besought me to assist in keeping the matter secret from her friend; and also requested me, to spare, if possible, the feelings of your family, by keeping them in ignorance of an affair that must tend to degrade you in their eyes, as well as in those of every other person to whom it might become known.

'I am indeed *extremely* indebted to Miss Ludlow, for her timely interference,' said Mr. Wilmot, with a sarcastic air. 'Doubtless she is *perfectly* indifferent, whether my sister provides for her at her death or not. She may probably have saved a small independency,

out of the liberal allowance Miss Wilmot makes her; but otherwise, I am pretty sure she is pennyless. What my sister's intentions towards her are, I am ignorant, but this I know,' adjoined he, his face reddening, and his countenance beaming with the mingled feelings of jealousy and mortification, 'that my father, the late Nathaniel Wilmot, Esq. never intended the money he laboured so long to procure for his children's benefit, should be bestowed on an obscure individual, whom nobody knows.'

"This was too much for Wallace. The insulting manner in which Mr. Wilmot had spoken of the woman he adored, had roused his feelings to the highest pitch; and he was on the point of venting his wrath on the contemptible object before him, when Mr. Mackintosh, fearing what might be the consequence, begged him to desist, and

consider himself superior to entering into a quarrel with so despicable a character.

"Then turning to Mr. Wilmot, 'Here Sir,' said he, 'is the detail of my proposition; you will have the goodness to read it, and by to-morrow's post I shall expect an answer. Mr. Wallace and myself return to town immediately; but before I depart, let me assure you that my determination is unalterable. By submitting to every condition therein-mentioned, is the only possible means by which you can hope to shield your name from public infamy.'

"Having said this, our friends departed.

'Well,' said Mr. Mackintosh, 'he is as great a villain as I ever met with. Surely the earth does not contain many such. We have however effectually silenced him I believe; depend on it,

he will rejoice at getting out of the scrape so easily as he has done. I'll venture to say, his letter will convey an entire submission to all my proposals: but enough of him; let us revert to a more interesting subject, and tell me, Montague, have you ever spoken to Miss Ludlow, on the subject of your attachment.' 'No, my dear sir, I resolved not to take any decisive step, until you had from your own judgment sanctioned my doing so.' 'Are you then sure that your affection is returned?' 'Although her lips have never given me the delightful assurance, still I am vain and sanguine enough to feel confident of success. My pointed attentions have never been repulsed, and I am persuaded that Emma Ludlow is too little of a coquette, to trifle with the feelings of a man, who she knows adores her.

'I shall immediately on my arrival in town, repair to Egremont Cottage, in order to quiet her anxiety respecting

Miss Wilmot. Perhaps you will accompany me; do, dear sir, I entreat you; and hasten to forward the happiness of your friend, by sanctioning the first wish of his heart. To the hand of Emma Ludlow I aspire. Possessing her, I covet neither riches nor honours; she alone can add to my felicity; alone can constitute my happiness. Of wealth I possess a sufficiency to provide us with the comforts, and if necessary, with the luxuries of life, and what more can I desire? Am I not gifted far beyond my deserts? and when to these blessings, I can add the possession of my lovely Emma, who will dare to pronounce themselves happier than Montague Wallace?' "Who will dare to boast the possession of a warmer heart than Montague Wallace?' said Mr. Mackintosh, smiling; 'No, one that knows him as well as I do. But suppose you descend from the airy visions in which

you have transported yourself, and assist me in forming a cool and dispassionate judgment, on the important subject before us.

'I will admit your prospects to be favourable, Montague, and, provided the object of your choice is deserving the exalted character you give her, I will even coincide with you in thinking, that as far as the uncertainty of human events can enable us to form an opinion, your hopes of happiness are not without foundation. But in this world, Montague, there are no pleasures without alloy—no felicity unclouded by the storms of adversity. Hitherto your career has glided smoothly by, unmarked by misfortune, untinctured by grief or sorrow. May happiness still be your lot; but if Heaven has deemed it otherwise, learn to bear your trials with the fortitude of a Christian. And when the sunshine of life is o'er; when bending under the weight of age, may the re-

trospect of past years, afford you soothing and comfortable reflection. Blessed with the hope of a glorious immortality, may you sink into the grave honoured and beloved by all around you.'

"Early the following day, Montague reminded Mr. Mackintosh of his promise to accompany him to Harrow. The beauty of the morning rendered the ride extremely agreeable. On their arrival, they fastened their horses to the gate of the shrubbery, and entered a private path that led to the cottage, through which Montague was at all times privileged to pass, it being shorter than by the public road. In this shrubbery was Emma's favourite alcove. She had had it built solely for her own use, and thither in the summer she retired with her books, music, &c. It was in a very secluded spot, and fitted up with much taste and elegance. Miss Wilmot's health ill prevented her rising until eleven or twelve o'clock, whereas

Emma seldom remained in bed during the summer after six; so that she was enabled from this circumstance, to pass many hours in her cherished retreat.

"As Mr. Mackintosh and Montague approached, they were struck with the sound of a harp, accompanied by an exquisitely sweet voice. The song was one of Moore's Irish Melodies; "Go where glory waits thee." The words of themselves strikingly expressive, were rendered more so by the feeling and taste of the performance. Unconscious that any one was near, Emma sung without diffidence; and consequently better, and with more freedom than she would have done, had she been conscious of a stranger's presence. Thus in happy ignorance she concluded the melody, and as she replaced the harp, repeated with emotion the last line; adding, 'Ah! how sweet it is to be remembered by those we love.'

"The intruders now presented themselves. They acknowledged that the sweetness of her voice had arrested their attention, and induced them to listen to her song, which had delighted them exeeedingly.

"Emma blushed, and said, 'Surely, Mr. Wallace, it was cruel to break in on my retirement so unexpectedly. You know I sing only for my own amusement, or sometimes for that of Miss Wilmot, whose kind partiality leads her to feel pleasure in my humble performance. Indeed I will forgive this frolic only on condition that it shall never again be repeated.'

Montague however was happy in having given his friend an opportunity of hearing Emma sing, and although he offered an apology, his countenance at the same time beamed with the most lively and expressive emotion.

The trio now repaired to the cot-

tage. Miss Wilmot was rejoiced to see Montague. She complained bitterly of his absence, and turning to Mr. Mackintosh, said, 'I assure you, Sir, we have found him sadly wanting; our evenings have particularly reminded us of our loss; and indeed, Mr. Wallace, I am very anxious respecting the fate of poor Caroline of Litchfield, and her ardent lover Baron Lindorf; but Emma would not permit me to read a syllable, until you were here to partake the delight with us.'

Our heroine cast a disapproving glance at her friend, but to Montague the compliment was highly flattering, and he was preparing to make a suitable reply, when Emma, anticipating his intention, hurried out of the room, exclaiming that the postman was coming up the lawn, and that she hoped to receive her long-expected letter. On some frivolous pretence, Montague soon followed; and leaving him to

give an account of the Southampton gentleman, we will return to Miss Wilmot and Mr. Mackintosh.

'Mr. Wallace,' said the former, 'is apparently an excellent young man, Mr. Mackintosh; he was introduced to us by Fielding, and I never, I think, felt so immediately interested for any young person in my life. To the polished gentleman, and an elegant person, he adds the power of pleasing to an infinite degree. His manners are so truly unaffected, that he appears wholly unconscious of the possession of those charms which must be forcibly felt by all who have the pleasure of his acquaintance.'

'I feel highly gratified,' returned Mr. Mackintosh, 'in hearing so warm an eulogium passed on the esteemed son of my adoption. When a child Mr. Wallace was committed to my care by his father. From this circumstance, you cannot wonder that I feel for him all

the affection of a parent; and am proud to acknowledge that he merits the good opinion you have formed of him.'

'This assurance delights me,' said Miss Wilmot; 'but think me not a disinterested observer. I feel it a duty incumbent on me, to speak openly to you on a subject that concerns us equally, and more particularly your amiable ward and the adopted child of my affection. You were intimately connected with Captain and Mrs. Ludlow, and doubtless have not forgotten the melancholy circumstances of their death. Emma was then only three years of age; since that time she has not been separated from me a day together. In her my existence appears to be interwoven, and my happiness centered; think then how warmly I must be interested in an affair on which her happiness depends. Although a silent observer, I cannot be ignorant of the impression Mr. Wallace has

made on her heart; every day confirms my opinion, and convinces me that I am not deceived in my conjectures. If he admires a piece of music, or a song, it is sure to be practised with particular care and attention. If in our daily rambles, he remarks a view as being strikingly pretty, Emma's leisure hours are all devoted to the completion of the drawing; indeed from the commencement of their acquaintance, his name appears to have given a zest to all her employments.

'A slight incident occurred a few days since, which, had my suspicions before lain dormant, would have immediatety roused me to a conviction of the truth. It was the last visit he paid us. We had bëen spending a few hours in Emma's favourite alcove; Mr. Wallace had been reading to us; and on our return through the shrubbery, he stopped to admire and gather a few violets, that grew in a large clump, around

the root of a tree. I had procured these violets from the gardener, at Emma's particular request, and frequently since they have been planted, she has said to me, 'Those beautiful violets, my dear mother (for such is the affectionate appellation she gives me), claim my regard, more than any other flowers in the garden; and not only mine, for their conspicuous situation, and delightful fragrance, draw on them the admiration of all who pass that way; I hope they will never be transplanted.'

'A hint however from Mr. Wallace was sufficient to remove all Emma's scruples. 'I think, Miss Ludlow,' said he, 'that a few of these violets, added to the sweet odour of the clematis and honey-suckle, that entwine the pillars of your alcove, would be a considerable improvement.'

'Do you,' she said; and then directing her attention to some other

object, she turned the conversation. Yesterday, I perceived that his wishes had been executed, and that the much-admired violets were transferred to the alcove.

I joked Emma on the subject, and conscious of what she had done she blushed, but said nothing. I therefore conclude that no proposals of a serious nature have been made by Mr. Wallace, as in that case she would not for a moment have hesitated to communicate them to me. She is nature's self, she is above dissimulation, and I am so persuaded that did she not imagine she possessed Montague's affections, she would instantly discourage his attentions. They have certainly been very pointed, and to confess the truth, I admire him too much to wish them otherwise. He is calculated to make Emma happy, but if those attentions have no other source than that of

common civility, her situation is critical and dangerous in the extreme.

'Your fears, my dear Madam,' rejoined Mr. Mackintosh, 'are perfectly natural, but I am happy to say groundless. I know Montague's sentiments, and can assure you that his heart is no less devoted to Miss Ludlow than her's is to him. The attachment is mutual, and he only waits my sanction to declare himself in due form. I came prepared by my zealous friend to meet a paragon of perfection in your amiable child, and as far as I am enabled to judge from this short interview, I think her possessed of those feminine graces so desirable, and that so highly adorn the sex, with an amiableness of mind and disposition that must render Montague happy. In person and manners she strongly resembles her departed mother, with whom I was intimately acquainted, and who was an ornament to every society of which she was a member. Her voice too reminds me of those strains

to which in my younger days I so often listened with delight;' and he then related to Miss Wilmot the circumstance that had given him an opportunity of hearing her sing.

The young people now entering, the conversation became general. Soon after Mr. Mackintosh and Montague made their congée, promising at an early period to repeat their visit.

"You will, all my dear children," said Mrs. B. "easily conjecture what subject engrossed the thoughts and conversation of the gentlemen, during their ride home; suffice it to say, that Mr. Mackintosh was compelled to acknowledge Emma Ludlow a very lovely girl; 'and I earnestly wish,' rejoined he, 'that you will not long retard a union, so calculated to afford delight and satisfaction to all parties.'

"The ardent Montague, overcome by the warmth of his feelings, would, had not his situation prevented, have

prostrated himself before his friend, and tendered his thanks; but the restive animal on which he was seated, recalled his departed senses, and reminded him, that if disposed to save his neck, he must subdue for a while the transports of love, and exert his ability as a good horseman.

"They however reached home in safety, and the following evening, according to his promise, Montague, putting the letter Mr. Mackintosh had received from Southampton into his pocket, and which, as he expected, breathed throughout a strain of the most abject servility, exactly descriptive of the writer, repaired to Egremont Cottage.

"During the ride, his heart beat with the most lively emotion. Flattering visions floated on his imagination. He was going on the wings of love, to open his heart to the woman who possessed his entire and sole affection, and from whom he sanguinely expected the de-

lightful assurance of a mutual return. 'I am sure she loves me!' he mentally exclaimed; 'and will she refuse to make me the happiest of men by telling me so? Oh, no! I dare not harbour such an idea; she is too kind to inflict unnecessary pain, by keeping me in torturing suspense; she will not, I am confident, pierce a heart that breathes only for her.' In this romantic state of mind, our hero arrived at the gate of the cottage.

" He entered the shrubbery, but contrary to his hopes and wishes, he found the alcove deserted by its owner. The violets however did not escape his attention, and this instance of Emma's kindness gratified him exceedingly. He culled a bouquet, and placed it in his bosom, as a testimony that this proof of regard had not passed unnoticed. From thence he proceeded quickly to the cottage, and found Emma employed in reading to her friend. 'Ah, truant,'

said Miss Wilmot, playfully, 'I am delighted you are come, for I am over anxious to hear how Caroline and the poor Baron go on.' 'Baron Lindorf, and Caroline of Litchfield,' said Montague, making a very low bow, 'accept my most gracious thanks, as it is to you I am indebted for Miss Wilmot's kind reception. Certainly, dear Madam, the compliment is highly flattering, and so fascinating are the objects that, with magnetic influence, draw my steps to Egremont Cottage, that I will, even at the expence of my poor lungs, (and here he feigned a violent fit of coughing) undertake to devote some hours daily, to your's and Miss Ludlow's amusement.' This was said in an appropriate tone of voice, which excited the risible faculties of the ladies, who begged to assure him that his company was far preferable to the adventures of a hero of romance. Peace being restored, the amiable Caroline was sought

for, and Montague continued the narrative.

"He had read some time, when Miss Wilmot, anticipating perhaps the purport of his visit, proposed that Emma and himself should walk to the gardener's, and bring home a plant she had bespoken the day before. 'I have a letter of importance to write, my love,' she said, 'therefore cannot accompany you this evening.' 'But why not defer your letter writing until tomorrow, my dear mother? your company would add greatly to the pleasure of our walk.' 'No, my love,' returned Miss Wilmot, 'it is impossible longer to delay it, I ought to have sent it yesterday.' On hearing this, Emma put on her bonnet and shawl, and hastened to join her impatient companion, who fancied every minute an hour when separated from her.

"They had not proceeded far before Montague respectfully tendered a de-

claration of his love. He made known his sentiments with so much warmth and disinterested affection, that Emma, whose heart had long owned him its absolute master, was too much overcome to utter a syllable. Taking as it were advantage of her silence, Montague with increased ardour entreated her to pronounce his fate. 'If you accept me,' said he, 'my happiness is complete. Without you life will be to me a desert, and riches unavailing. Speak then, Emma, and sanction my most sanguine hopes, by one little affirmative, one satisfying glance.'

"A blush of timid confussion overspread the countenance of the lovely girl, as she tenderly pronounced that her heart and hand was Montague's. With sudden and inexpressible joy, he exclaimed, pressing her hand to his heart, 'May it then ever be the study of your Montague, to prove himself deserving this precious gift.'

"To expatiate on this subject would be folly, I will therefore pass over in silence the scene that followed Montague's declaration, and Emma's avowal. I must also request you, my dears, to imagine our enraptured hero travelling at a swift pace towards the gay metropolis, and return with me to our more tranquil friends at Harrow.

"Emma related to Miss Wilmot with delight, what had transpired between herself and Mr. Wallace.

'Generous Montague!' she exclaimed, not endeavouring to suppress the feelings of her heart; 'if any thing could have raised him in my opinion, it is the manner in which he has consulted your happiness, my dear mother, as well as my own. He anticipates all our wishes. He knows that a separation between yourself and me would be painful, and has therefore proposed our residing under the same roof. 'Your estimable friend,' said he, 'shall

have a suite of rooms entirely devoted to her own use, that when she feels inclined to retire from the little society we may entertain, she may not run the risk of being disturbed.' Is he not considerate, my dear mother? and does not this instance of his goodness afford you pleasure?' 'In truth it does my love, but it is not more than I expected from Mr. Wallace. He knows my maternal affection for you; and, although I would have submitted to a separation, had it been my Emma's desire, still I feel confident that my weak nature would have sunk under the weight of sorrow, such a separation would occasion ——' 'My wish,' returned Emma, throwing herself into the arms of her friend, 'and can you for a moment imagine, that your own, your dear child, would have ever consented to so cruel a measure? Oh, how you must mistake the heart you have formed, to harbour such an idea.

Believe me, the man that would require such a sacrifice, should never possess the hand of Emma Ludlow.'

'I know it well, my sweet love,' said Miss Wilmot affectionately; 'you have invariably proved yourself the most tender and dutiful of children, and I warmly participate in the cheerful prospects that surround you. Montague is calculated to make you happy: he has judgment to guide, and affection to soothe you. The morning of my life is past, and I am fast hastening to my eternal home. The consciousness of leaving my Emma under the protecting care of a tender husband, will ameliorate the sufferings of death, and quiet my anxieties. The happy assurance also of knowing that the child of my affection, the companion and friend of my heart, will be ever present to support my feeble frame, and comfort my declining years, will be a soothing palliative, under that

decay of nature which, in common with mankind, I may be doomed to endure. Hitherto I have been mercifully spared those pains and infirmities attendant on old age, but if my remaining years be marked by these common tokens of mortality, may they be borne with humble submission to the Divine Will, as the sole author of what is best for the ultimate happiness of his creatures. But I will not anticipate evil, or allow myself at present to dwell on the future; rather in this embrace,' she said, pressing Emma tenderly to her bosom, 'let me rejoice in the felicity of my child; and hope, that health and strength will permit me, at some future period, to clasp in my arms another Emma, in whose infantine features, I may trace a resemblance to those of its affectionate mother.

"They now separated for the night, but sleep visited not the eyes of Emma.

The solitude of her own apartment was sweet. Every word, every sentence that Montague had uttered, was dwelt on with rapturous delight. 'How pure, how exalted are his sentiments,' thought she, 'how sound his reasoning; how disinterested his affection. Can any person's lot be happier than mine? surely it is not possible; but in my joy, I will not forget the hand that has so profusely shed these blessings on me. I will on the contrary, express gratitude and humility to that all-wise Power, whose gifts they are, and who can withdraw them at his pleasure.' Thus did this amiable girl unite the feelings of true religion, with the overpowering emotions of her heart. 'She forgat not the counsels of the Lord, but relied on his strength; she sought refuge under his wings, and made his faithfulness and truth her shield and buckler.' Committing herself to his care and protection, she

at length calmly sunk into the arms of Morpheus. Bright visions floated on her imagination, and she awoke in the morning to realize those pleasing hopes her dreams had originated.

"With a light heart her fairy form bounded over the lawn, as she sought the cottages, where resided the pensioners on her friend's bounty, for to her was now committed the pleasing task of administering to, and relieving their distresses, Miss Wilmot's health not allowing her to undergo the fatigue. On her return she found Montague waiting in the breakfast-room, to partake that meal with her. Exercise had heightened the natural brilliancy of her complexion, and she appeared in the eyes of her lover, more beautiful than he had ever seen her.

The delight of meeting, gladdened their hearts, and they rose from their repast, to enjoy together the freshness of a summer morning. Through crea-

tion, they adored creation's God; and in contemplating the works of nature, they joined in praising that eternal Being who giveth life and breath to all things. Their steps were instinctively drawn towards the favourite alcove. On entering it, Montague stooped to gather a few of the favoured violets. He presented some to Emma, and ventured to express his thanks for her kind attention to his wishes.

In interesting converse, time unheeded flew:
Aurora had already chas'd the pearly dew,
And sought the deep recess, where the clematis grew,
That shadow'd the alcove—

when a rustling of the leaves in the shrubbery, announced the approach of a footstep. Montague rose, and was accosted by a servant, who informed him that a carriage had just arrived, with a gentleman and lady in it, who enquired for Miss Ludlow, and desired

to see her. Emma could not at all conceive who the strangers were: she expected no visitors, she was confident that it must be a mistake; and without the slightest idea of meeting a friend, she entered the house.

"A gentleman and lady were standing at the window, admiring the prospect, but who they were she had not the slightest suspicion. They turned towards her, on hearing the door open, and Emma curtseying, politely said, she apprehended some mistake had arisen, and that they had been directed to the wrong house. 'Have I the pleasure,' said the gentleman, advancing, 'to address Miss Ludlow, daughter of the late Captain Ludlow?' 'You have sir,' replied Emma. 'Then in me, my dear niece, behold his brother,' continued he, clasping her in his arms. Emma affectionately returned the embrace, and begged to be introduced to his companion. Mrs. Ludlow,

for it was her aunt, now shared in the general joy of so unexpected a meeting; and Emma ran to apprize Miss Wilmot and Montague of their arrival, who both immediately appeared to welcome the strangers. The latter, on being introduced to Mrs. Ludlow, evinced much surprize; Emma quickly perceived it, nor could she avoid remarking, that he kept his eyes fixed on her, as if endeavouring to trace some resemblance.

"The mystery however was soon unravelled. Miss Wilmot and Mr. Ludlow, had formerly been old friends; and in answer to her enquiries, he said that his return to England, from the East-Indies, had been rather unexpected. 'It was not my intention to have visited this country,' he rejoined, 'until next year, but my wife having received an account of her brother's declining health, and an offer having been made for the purchase of my commis-

sion, I was induced to accept it *for her sake*, though at a slight pecuniary disadvantage; and after a most agreeable voyage, we landed on the shores of Great Britain about three weeks since.

'We immediately repaired to Edeford, and I am happy to say, found Mr. Tennison's health better than we expected. The sight also of his sister, to whom he was always particularly attached, has renovated his spirits, and roused him, in some measure, from the lethargic state, to which, I am informed, he has too much given way.'

"On hearing this, Montague rose, and respectfully approaching, introduced himself as Mr. Wallace. 'Your estimable brother, Madam,' he said, 'is my most valued friend; he superintended my education for several years, and to his benevolent instruction and able counsel, I am indebted for the little knowledge I possess. He then enquired with much solicitude for every

branch of the family, and concluded by saying, that it was his intention, provided no obstacle interfered with it, to revisit those scenes where the days of his childhood had been so happily spent, and which were endeared to him by a thousand pleasing recollections. 'Mr. Tennison and his son Edward, will, I am confident, be delighted to see you,' rejoined Mr. Ludlow; 'for they take a lively interest in your welfare, and indeed have commissioned me with a packet of letters for you.'

"Mrs. Ludlow now retired with Emma to change her travelling dress, and Montague promising to dine with them the following day, took his leave. After his departure, Miss Wilmot informed Mr. Ludlow of the engagement that subsisted between his neice and Mr. Wallace; speaking of him at the same time in the most flattering terms. 'I received from Mr. Tennison a very

exalted character of him,' observed Mr. Ludlow; 'and I sincerely rejoice in the prospect of happiness this union holds out to Emma, who is as lovely a girl as ever I saw. She is exactly what her mother was when poor Henry married her. Ah! that unfortunate battle, Miss Wilmot, how suddenly did it deprive you of the kindest of friends, and me of the best of brothers. Emma has I believe resided with you ever since. You have supplied the place of a tender mother to her, and heaven will shower down its choicest blessings on your head, for so good, so generous an action.'

'The obligation, my dear sir, is amply repaid by the affection and filial regard of my sweet child, who could not be more dear to me were she my own; but let me hear a little of your proceedings. How long have you been married? and where did you meet with Miss Tennison? I never

before heard of a younger sister.' 'She resided several years at Madras, with her aunt, Mrs. Robertson, widow of the late Major Robertson, of the Artillery. I met her at Macdonald's, where she was on a visit at the same time with myself, and, although an old soldier, was entrapped by her charms. We have been married ten years, and I can honestly say, that Caroline is, if possible, dearer to me than when I led her to the altar.'

"Thus it is, when marriages are formed on solid esteem and respect. The person in question now entered with Emma, who, anxious to show her the beauties of the country, proposed a walk. The excessive heat of the weather however prevented their enjoying it, and they returned exhausted and fatigued. Emma amused them by the display of her musical talents until dinner; after which a lively conversation was supported by Mr. and Mrs.

Ludlow, who related to their friends several interesting anecdotes, relative to the native Indians in the East and West Indies, where Mr. Ludlow had at one period been quartered.

" Miss Wilmot speke very feelingly on the slave trade. ' Nothing I think,' she said, ' could reconcile me to such scenes of dreadful barbarity: the relation of them makes my blood recoil; and I really blush for my fellow-creatures who can so inhumanly sever the nearest, the tenderest ties, who can condemn a poor wretch to toil out his days under the intense heat of a meridian sun, deprived of liberty, the most precious boon of heaven; torn from the enjoyment of domestic comfort; in a word, stripped of every thing that can make life desirable.'

' Your reflections are just, my dear madam; the traffic is indeed disgraceful, and repugnant to the feelings of an Englishman. An instance came under

my immediate observation, whilst in the Island of St. Kitt's, that I will relate to you. I was on a visit at the house of Mr. Hayne, a rich planter; he one morning asked me to join him in a walk round his plantation, to observe a curious shrub that was growing spontaneously among the canes. I complied with his request, and having pointed out to me the object that excited his surprize, he left me to return to the house, whence he was summoned. When alone, my attention was drawn to two negroes, who appeared to be conversing with much eagerness, though I could not but observe that on the approach of their master, they pursued their work with diligence. My curiosity was excited, and I was instinctively led to acquire a knowledge of the subject that seemed so wholly to engross their attention. In consequence therefore I refused returning into the house with Mr. Hayne; but

on his departure drew nearer to the slaves, and stationed myself behind some thick foilage, that entirely hid me from their sight, though I was enabled to hear distinctly all that passed.'

'Ah,' said one of them, very dejectedly, 'me think so too; massa is very hard upon poor slave, and now we have lost friends, and never shall get no liberty, what use is we to live.' 'No use, 'tis no use,' returned the other; 'we die togeder, and up in dat pretty blue sky, we see poor Yamba and Nora. So say dat sweet white lady, who used to talk to poor black man. She give comfort to dis poor torn heart.' 'But de lady say, Mungo, dat you, me, be patient under de great sufferings, and we be no good to kill each oder.' My heart was bursting, and I resolved to use some effectual means to save these unfortunate crea-

tures. A slight noise that I made terrified them exceedingly, and they regarded each other with a look that I shall never forget. It was expressive of the bitterest despair, and I mentally exclaimed—'Is it possible that a man, possessed as Mr. Hayne apparently is, of all the finer feelings, a man possessing the knowledge of redemption, and acquainted with the tenets of Christianity!—Is it possible, that he can so far forget the common duties of humanity, as to sacrifice, for the accumulation of a little paltry wealth, the happiness, and even the life of his fellow-creatures?'

'I addressed the men kindly, and bid them not be afraid. They appeared to discredit their senses, and looked earnestly at me for an explanation. I told them that I had overheard their conversation, and begged them to confide to me their reasons for meditating

self-destruction. 'Because we die under de lash,' said both at the same instant.

'Let one speak first,' said I, looking at the oldest of the two; 'and tell me why you are made to suffer so much more than your companions.' 'Because we no strong arms, no strong legs, no strong body; we no do all work, dat de oders do, but we try; and massa say we lazy dog, idle rascal, and we get no meat, we starve; derefore we say we kill one de oder. Mungo is my broder, and we no part. Our dear Nora and Yamba die many mont ago, and we go to dem when we die.' 'Will you go to England with me,' said I, 'there all is free, and no master will ever beat you or serve you ill?' 'Me no go widout Mungo,' he said: and I could not help admiring his fraternal affection. 'I did not intend to separate you,' I said; 'if your

master will permit me, I will take you both away from this place.'

'On hearing this they embraced each other, fell on their knees, and by various signs, endeavoured to evince their gratitude, but I desired them to be moderate, and work diligently, until they saw me again. I then went to Mr. Hayne, and told him that I should like to purchase two of his slaves, to take to England with me; and as the work I should have for them to do, would be trifling in comparison to their present employment, I proposed taking the two weakest in his service.

'He readily assented to my proposition, and, as I expected, conducted me to the spot where stood the miserable brothers. He spoke harshly to them, and bid them prepare to serve a new master, for that he was tired of them. The poor creatures would have instantly expressed their gratitude if not restrained by the presence of their

master, with whom I immediately retreated, fearing that if they should betray the confidence they had reposed in me, Mr. Hayne would be displeased.

'During the voyage, Caroline and myself took great pains to teach them the language of this country. Their progress was rapid, and they were enabled to read a chapter in the Bible tolerably well, in a very short time; and in fact, I at length succeeded, through God's assistance, in rendering these poor neglected slaves worthy members of society.' All the party united in commending Mr. Ludlow, for his humanity in relieving from tyranny, poor Mungo and his brother. 'I am only astonished,' said Emma, 'that such a man as Mr. Hayne, could command your respect or esteem?'

'The truth is, my love, that custom hardens the heart; and these West India Planters are so familiarized to acts of barbarity, that while treating

their slaves with disgraceful severity, they really consider themselves as merely doing their duty. Without regarding them in the light of fellow-creatures, they imagine them, I believe, born for sole use and service. Mistaken idea! of what incalculable misery is it productive! How often do we see men, endowed in an eminent degree with generous and noble virtues, condemned to a life of eternal slavery, and looking forward to the grave, as the only termination to their earthly sufferings. Thanks however to a kind Providence, who equally regards the sceptered and the slave, this disgraceful traffic is in a great measure abolished; but although the exertions of our country have been crowned with great success, I fear nevertheless that the inhuman practice still prevails in many parts of the globe.'

"The approach of night was hailed with pleasure by the major part of the

company. Mr. and Mrs. Ludlow were glad to retire to rest, after the fatigues of the day, and Emma longed for the morrow—it would bring Montague to the cottage.

"At the expiration of three days Miss Wilmot was obliged, though reluctantly, to part with her visitors. Mr. Ludlow had purchased a house in the vicinity of Edeford, and he wished to be present to superintend some alterations in the building. Montague however, with Emma's consent, proposed to spend the honey-moon at Mr. Tennison's; Miss Wilmot was to accompany them, and the friends separated mutally pleased with this arrangement.

"The happy period was fast approaching that would unite two hearts, already cemented by the strong ties of love and affection. July was drawing to a close, and the nineteenth of August was fixed on, for the celebra-

tion of the nuptials, it being Miss Wilmot's birth-day.

"Time glided swiftly by, and the wished for morning at length arrived. It was particularly fine, and at an early hour the ceremony was performed in the church at Harrow, by Dr. Mellindorf, in the presence only of Miss Wilmot, Mr. Fielding, and Mr. Mackintosh. The latter supplied the place of a father, in giving the lovely bride to her adoring husband. Emma conducted herself with the strictest propriety; she evinced that steadiness of mind and deportment which the seriousness of the occasion seemed to call for, giving way to no burst of feeling expressive either of temerity or exultation; she felt that the change in her situation, would call her to perform much higher duties, than had ever before fallen to her lot. True, she was about to give herself to the man who possessed her undivided affection. To him she was to devote her future life, and on him her happiness entirely

depended; 'But,' she mentally observed, 'will it not be my duty so to conduct myself, as always to retain the regard of my husband? Yes, it shall be my sole, my unremitting study so to do; I will be to him a friend and companion, and through the chances and changes of this sublunary state, I will, by participating in his sorrows, relieve their poignancy, and soothe his feelings, by my affectionate attentions.'

"Such were the reflections of this amiable girl; and they lead me to deliberate a little, on the subject in question. In our communications with mankind, many instances of discontent and unhappiness in the marriage state present themselves, occasioned, frequently, by difference of opinion, and contrariety of tastes and habits. A similarity of sentiment is certainly necessary to domestic comfort, and social enjoyment; but if, after a union is irrevocably fixed, faults are discovered, and you find yourself de-

ceived in the object of your choice, let not the bitterness of disappointment be shewn in the indulgence of ill-humour or caprice; rather by patient forbearance, convince your husband that you are anxious to secure his approbation; and if he ever truly loved you, depend upon it such a plan of conduct will succeed much better than any other, in reclaiming his wandering affections.'

"After the ceremony was over, the party breakfasted at Egremont Cottage, and then set off for Edeford. Dr. Mellindorf, on taking leave of Emma, placed her hand in that of her husband's, saying, 'Guard well this precious gift, Mr. Wallace; it is an invaluable treasure. Heaven will shower down its choicest blessings on you both,' he rejoined, pointing to the firmament—

"Where Sol appeared in perfect beauty,
"Shedding its heavenly influence on all around;"

for 'Blessed is the bride that the sun shineth upon.'

"Wallace, eagerly pressing her hand to his lips, promised compliance; and placing her in the carriage with Miss Wilmot, took his seat beside her. By the aid of four horses, Harrow and its environs quickly receded from the view of our travellers.

"They were received with open arms by Mr. Tennison, and his worthy friends the Ludlow's; but Montague felt surprized and hurt, that Edward, his old friend and companion, should not be present to welcome his arrival, after so long a separation. On enquiry, Mr. Tennison said, he was at Oxford. 'I expected him yesterday,' he added, 'but rest assured, he will be here to-day; the circumstance that has called him from home is not unimportant; nothing of a trivial nature would have prevented his being here, to share with his family the joy your appearance has given rise to.'

"Dinner being over, Mrs. Ludlow enquired if any of the party felt inclined

to accompany her in a walk, as she was going to meet her nephew. The young people gladly availed themselves of the invitation, but Miss Wilmot preferred remaining with Mr. Tennison and Mr. Ludlow.

" They had not proceeded far before they perceived a chaise approaching rapidly towards them: 'Here they are,' exclaimed Mrs. Ludlow. '*They!*' rejoined Montague, in a tone of astonishment; 'who then accompanies Edward?' and some suspicion of the truth glanced over his mind. Before however Mrs. Ludlow had time to answer his enquiries, the carriage had stopped, and Montague found himself in the cordial embrace of his friend. Recollecting himself, he retreated; begged to be introduced to Mrs. M. Ludlow, shook hands with his aunt, and apologized for his want of politeness, in not observing the accustomed salutation before. 'But I am half bewildered with joy, my dear

Montague; the sight of you is alone sufficient to make me happy; but in presenting to you my dearest Fanny, under the appellation of Mrs. Edward Tennison,' opening the carriage door, and assisting out a very lovely young woman, 'will you not admit that I have just grounds for the exuberance of spirits in which you now see me. Truly, Montague, such supreme felicity is enough to turn a man's senses.' Fanny blushed much, and turning to her husband, she bid him recollect that an introduction was necessary; 'for although in the present company,' she said, 'I am prepared to meet friends of my Edward's, still I am quite at a loss by what names to address them.'

"Emma, feeling her situation, approached, and with that native politeness, of which she was always mistress, introduced herself, and begged Mrs. E. Tennison would accept her arm. The three ladies then proceeded, leav-

ing the gentlemen to explain to each other, the circumstances of this sudden and unexpected event. 'I certainly knew,' said Wallace, 'that you were engaged to Miss Villars, but I had not the slightest idea of your intended marriage. What was the reason for keeping it so secret, Edward?' 'Because I wished to surprize you. Our union, as you already know, has long been retarded on account of my youth, and possessing only a curacy. Mr. Villars, as well as my father, thought it more prudent to postpone the marriage for a few years.

'Young people are generally impatient, and never more so I believe than when dame Fortune steps in to damp the bright prospect of grateful delusion, and we testified no little chagrin at the delay to which we were of necessity obliged to submit. A circumstance however occurred about two months since, that entirely altered the

aspect of affairs, and inspired Fanny and myself with hopes the most sanguine. The incumbent of Selworth died last June. My father had been promised the living by Mr. James Alney, my dear mother's cousin, in whose gift it is. On receiving intelligence of old Mr. Fareham's death, Mr. Alney immediately wrote an exceedingly kind letter to my father, presenting him with the Rectory of Selworth for his son. I was of course overjoyed at this intelligence—it was the harbinger of my happiness; and after having called on Mr. Alney, to thank him for his generosity, I flew on the wings of love to Oxford, informed Mr. Villars of my good fortune, and intreated him to perfect my happiness and that of his child, by promoting a union to which there was now no barrier.

'I had obtained my father's sanction before I left Edeford, and it was at this period I received your letter. You in-

formed me that the nineteenth of August was fixed on for the celebration of your nuptials. The idea immediately occurred to me, that I would gain Fanny's consent to be married on the twelfth, and, unknown to you, would repair to Edeford, that we might be present to welcome your arrival. On calculating however, we found that the twelfth happened on a Sunday, and we therefore fixed on the thirteenth, hoping still to be at my father's house before you; but see there he is at the window!' and in a few moments he was in his parent's presence.

"Mr. Tennison, his countenance beaming with satisfaction, looked ten years younger than he had done a month before; such an influence has tranquillity of mind and true happiness on the bodily health and appearance.

"The following morning Montague rode to Selworth with Edward Tennison, to see the rectory. It was about fifteen miles distant from Edeford, and

pleasantly situated. The late incumbent, a very worthy man, had spared no expence in improvements; and the house and gardens were in delightful order.

"A month was passed at Edeford in the most perfect harmony, and it was with feelings of the deepest regret to all parties, that a separation was talked of. Montague however thought it necessary to return to his avocations in town, for although Mr. Mackintosh had not recalled him, still he felt assured that his assistance must be found wanting, and that it was only from gentle manly feeling on the part of Mr. M. that he had not done so. Edward Tennison also felt it his duty to repair to Selworth, and guard, with watchful diligence, the flock committed to his care. He considered the charge in a sacred light; and his amiable wife longed to partake with him, the pleasure of relieving the distresses of the indigent, and adminis-

nistering to the wants of the sick and afflicted.

"To any proposal of Emma's, Miss Wilmot readily acceded, and Mr. Tennison was too good a man for a moment to consult his own inclinations, where duty and honour forbid the indulgence.

Mr. and Mrs. Ludlow, with their servants, had for some time taken possession of their house, which was not more than half-a-mile from the rectory of Edeford. Montague's party arrived in safety at the place of their destination, and the same evening took possession of the mansion prepared for their reception. With sincere pleasure Montague listened to the approbation which his lovely wife bestowed on every part of it, as he led her through the different apartments. On entering the drawing-room, she was much struck with some large paintings very elegantly framed, and on approaching nearer, discovered, to her astonishment, that they were her own

performance. She looked at her husband for an explanation. 'Forgive the deception, my love,' he said; 'your kind friend, Miss Wilmot, assisted me in robbing your port-folio, and indeed there is no occasion to blush at your execution; at least, Emma, you will spare reproach, when I assure you that these paintings, though probably inferior, are more gratifying to my sight than the most finished performances of West or Raphael, they are the work of this precious hand,' he said, tenderly kissing it, 'and that is a sufficient recommendation.'

"So flattering a compliment could not fail to reconcile the person to whom it was addressed, and, after having taken a survey of her house, throughout which there presided a simple elegance, that assimilated exactly with her own taste, she returned to her friend, who, being fatigued, retired early to rest.

"Nothing transpired to disturb the peace of this amiable family for several years, excepting the death of Miss Wilmot. Emma, as may be imagined, keenly felt the loss she had sustained; but in regretting it, she rejoiced in the happy assurance that her friend had died a true Christian. The pains and infirmities of old age, were borne by this excellent woman with humble submission to the divine will. She considered them as in mercy sent from God, to wean her altogether from the world. Her earthly sorrows were productive of heavenly consolation; and she looked forward with joy unspeakable, to that happy transition which would transport her into the realms of eternal bliss. Possessed of a calm and undisturbed serenity of mind, she no longer dwelt on the fleeting pleasures of this dangerous and deceitful world, but resting her hopes of happiness on the Rock of Christ, she was prepared to exclaim

with St. Paul, 'I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good faith, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.'

"According to the prediction of her brother, Miss Wilmot left the whole of her property to Emma, who looked on it as an additional cause for gratitude to the all-wise Giver of benefits. She followed the good example of her departed friend, by sharing her wealth with the necessitous and indigent. 'She delivered the poor in his affliction, and opened their ears in oppression.'

"One little girl, the only offspring of their mutual loves, was a source of amusement and comfort to her doating parents. Emma delighted in cultivating her tender mind, and improving the infantine graces of her person.

"Often, when her husband was absent, would she sit and contemplate with delight, this beloved object of their affectionate solicitude. She would recall to herself the time when a sudden stroke deprived her at once of a tender mother and father. A tear bedewed her lovely cheek as she dwelt on the sorrowful recollection, and in fervent adoration she would exclaim, 'Heavenly Shepherd, who didst lay down thy life for the sheep, look on this thy child, stretch over her thy all-protecting arm, and if it please thee to deprive her of her earthly parents, be thou her father and her friend.' The sight of her beloved Montague however always tended to dissipate these melancholy ideas, the joy of his society left no room for the anticipation of future evil, and in happy ignorance of the impending cloud that overshadowed their present felicity, and which, like the fragments of a broken rock,

hung suspended by a slender cord, already threatening to hurl its destructive violence on this innocent pair, they passed their days in peaceful tranquillity, caressed and admired by all around them.

" But in this world there can be no duration of perfect felicity, all its joys are chimerical and transient. To-day surrounded by the friends we love, to-morrow deprived of them for ever, by the resistless hand of death. To-day partaking, with eager avidity, the sensual pleasures of the gay, unthinking, and dissolute, to-morrow stretched on the bed of sickness, a victim to pain and loathsome disease. Such are the proofs, such the awful warnings, that come under our observation almost every day that we live, and convince us, too truly, that the present moment is all we can call our own. Does it not then appear astonishing that the giddy multitude should so rest their

hopes of happiness on the perishable things of this world, as to presist in rejecting the counsel of the Lord, and withstanding all his reproof? Vain and inconsistent mortals! they know not but that before the brightness of the day shall have given place to the shadow of evening, their sun may be set in a perpetual night.

"But to proceed with my history. Six long years had rolled on in rapid succession, since the union of Mr. and Mrs. Wallace. Their days had been unruffled by the casual gloom that commonly marks human existence; they had enjoyed excellent health, and in their own domestic circle had experienced that true happiness, so vainly, yet so eagerly, sought after by the fashionable world, in the haunts of dissipation. Emma's tender anxiety was one evening alarmed by symptoms of indisposition in her husband. He complained of parching thirst, and a violent

head-ache. She persuaded him to go bed, and immediately sent for medical advice.

"Mr. Elford having visited his patient, pronounced him under the influence of a high fever. 'It is of the typhus kind,' he said, 'but what I have administered, added to your good nursing, will, I trust, do much towards his recovery.' As night approached however, the malady increased; and the morning found him delirious, and in imminent danger. Dr. S. an eminent physician, expressed the most alarming apprehensions, and pronounced the fever of an infectious nature. In consequence, Mrs. Wallace took lodgings near her own house, for Emily, where she was immediately removed; having provided for her safety, she again repaired, with a heart torn by anxiety, to the bedside of her suffering husband, who grew worse every hour, and continued either in heavy stupor or wild delirium.

"This was scene that called all her feelings into action; she saw before her, the husband of her tenderest affection, the father of her child, stretched on a bed of sickness, and in a state that almost precluded the hope of recovery.

"Sometimes he would call loudly on his wife, and entreat her, as she valued his peace, to return and save him from the power of such a villain as Wilmot. 'He will ruin our prospects! he will blast our happiness!' said he. At other times he would clasp her in his arms, and lavish on her the most tender caresses, though evidently under the influence of mental derangement.

"The distress of poor Mrs. Wallace was inconceivable. She sat by him in speechless agony, watching with some degree of hope when he lay quiet, and starting into the most heart-rending fears and apprehensions when he became

violent. Her fortitude of mind almost forsook her, and it required her utmost exertion to retain that composure so necessary in executing the duties she had to perform. She prayed earnestly to God for his assistance and support, under the weight of so heavy an affliction; 'But whatever may be the result,' she exclaimed, 'Oh, grant me patience and resignation to bear it as I ought.'

"The physicians entering soon after, were struck with her languid and pale countenance, and requested her to take a little repose during their stay. She complied, merely because she thought her absence might be desirable during their consultation, her mind being too much harassed to admit of rest. An hour, spent in the most torturing suspense, had now elapsed, still all was silent. 'Perhaps,' she exclaimed, he is dying!' and with frantic violence she flew to her husband's apartment, and begged admittance.

"Her haggard looks and dejected appearance plainly convinced Dr. S. that she had not composed herself, and he mildly reproached her for being so careless of her own health. 'Believe me, my dear madam,' he said, 'it is absolutely necessary that you should relax a little in your attendance.' 'I want no relaxation, I feel no fatigue,' interrupted Mrs. Wallace; 'nothing but the recovery of my beloved Montague can pour a balm on this wounded heart. In pity to my feelings, dear sir, tell me how he is; it will be a satisfaction to know he is alive. Hesitate not, I beseech you, to disclose his real situation, I am prepared for the worst.'

"Dr. S. in vain endeavoured to tranquillize her. 'Your husband, Mrs. Wallace,' he said, 'is alive, but I dare not flatter you with the idea of his being better. At present his situation is very critical, but the advantage of youth and a good constitution, will, I

trust, eventually overcome the disease.'

"Two more anxious days and nights did Emma pass at the bed-side of her suffering husband, but in spite of her unremitted exertions, and the skill of the physicians, he grew so much worse, that on the third no hopes whatever were entertained of his recovery.'

"She heard the decision, but spoke not a word. No friendly tear stole from her eye as she sat gazing on the livid features of her husband, with an expression of the bitterest despair. Pale as monumental marble, she looked as though the hand of death had already deprived her of reason, nor could the physicians succeed in rousing her. She answered their entreaties only by a look of wild and settled gloom. Nature however at length prevailed, and lifting her clasped hands towards heaven, she exclaimed, 'Thy

will, O God, be done!' and sunk, apparently lifeless, on the floor.

"The attendants now removed her into another apartment, and by means of proper restoratives, succeeded in recovering her reason. Dr. S. then used all his arguments to prevail on her to compose herself, and endeavour to take a little sleep. 'Permit me, Mrs. Wallace,' he said, 'to assure you, that by this continued attendance and constant fatigue, you will render yourself unfit for exertion, and should a favorable change take place, how will you reproach yourself, if, by perversely yielding to your inclinations, you unfit yourself for administering to your husband's wants, when he is capable of knowing to whose hand he is indebted for them. In his present state your absence would not be felt by him, but depend upon it, when he gets better, the tender assiduities of a wife will be far more beneficial than the skill of a physician.'

"As Dr. S. anticipated, this representation inspired Mrs. Wallace with new hope. It stimulated her to vigorous exertion, and she promised to compose herself and remain quiet until he called her. She permitted herself to dwell on the consoling idea of her dear Montague's recovery, and, as if the happy change had already taken place, she gratefully offered her thanks to the throne of divine mercy, for this new instance of his goodness.

"These salutary reflections assisted in calming her agitated spirits, and she soon after sunk into a sweet slumber, from which, when she awoke, she perceived Dr. S. sitting by her side, his benevolent countenance beaming with satisfaction. 'I have been anxiously waiting, my dear madam,' he said, 'to inform you that a favorable change has taken place in our patient. He has remained for the last three hours in a sound sleep, and I trust that the crisis

of the disorder is past.' 'God grant that your hopes may be realized,' returned Mrs. Wallace, and with trembling steps, she silently followed the doctor into her husband's apartment.

"Four more hours elapsed, and still Mr. Wallace remained under the influence of sleep. Dr. S. anxiously waited the termination. He was aware the crisis was at hand, and that this stupor would end either in the dissolution of his patient, or in the realization of his most sanguine hopes. He persuaded Mrs. Wallace to retire to a distant part of the room, and resuming his station at the bed, he watched with paternal anxiety the death-like features of Montague.

"Perfect silence reigned throughout the house. The glimmering of a single taper, that shed its expiring rays over the apartment, added to the solemnity of the scene, and gave rise to the most melancholy and desponding sensations in the breast of Emma. She could not

avoid contrasting her present distressing situation, with what it had been a week before. 'Health, peace, and felicity, then presided at our board,' she mentally exclaimed, 'and every face bloomed with the smiles of chearful content; but now all is changed, for him whose presence alone constituted our joy, is labouring under pain and sickness, and the sweet infant of our mutual love, is of necessity, torn from the bosom of maternal affection.'

"The respiration of Mr. Wallace now became evidently stronger, but it was calm and undisturbed; no convulsive startings agitated his slumber, and he at length awoke.

"For a few moments he appeared unconscious of his situation, and faintly said, 'Where am I?' On hearing those accents, so dear to her, she arose, but Dr. S. beckoned her to keep out of sight. 'Is my Emma here?' said Wallace. 'She will be shortly,' returned

the doctor; 'but we will not disturb her immediately. She has lately undergone much fatigue, and I have just now prevailed on her to take a little repose.' 'Heaven bless her;' said Montague, 'and my sweet Emily?' 'Is well,' rejoined Dr. S.; 'but I must entreat you to remain quiet; it is absolutely necessary.'

"Poor Emma, during this conversation, could with difficulty restrain her feelings. One moment she was prompted to fly into her husband's arms; but the next reflection convincing her of the impropriety of such a step, she listened to the dictates of prudence, and scarcely dared to breathe, for fear of betraying herself.

"Dr. S. administered to his patient a little gruel that Emma had prepared; after which he again sunk into a calm sleep, and did not awake until the morning was far advanced. Emma then approached, and tenderly em-

braced him; but all her natural fortitude returning with her husband's restoration to comparative health, she checked the transports of joy that swelled her bosom, and positively forbade his talking.

"At length the physicians were enabled to pronounce their patient out of danger from the fever; but so excessive was his debility, that they apprehended it would terminate in a decline.

"Week after week passed, but Montague acquired no additional strength. The depression of his spirits was great, and change of air was recommended as a dernier resource. To Fielding, who called on him the evening previous to his departure, he disclosed the real state of his mind. 'I am convinced,' he said, 'that this will be an eternal adieu. To you I commit the arrangement of my affairs in town; you will succeed me in the house, and

L——— will take your place—he is a worthy creature, and will I trust do his duty.'

"Fielding affectionately endeavoured to re-assure his drooping friend. 'You give way too much, my dear Montague; the fine air of the Welsh mountains, will, I doubt not, brace up your nerves, and re-establish your health.'

'Never, Henry, never; my race is almost run, and but for the sake of my dear wife, not one pang would the idea give me. I pine not at leaving the world, or its pleasures; but I anticipate with dread the bitter separation that must take place between Emma and myself. How she will bear the stroke, God only knows! Her tender and affectionate heart will, I fear, sink under it; but God is merciful, and in consideration of our lovely and innocent child, he will, I trust, support her through the weight of this heavy affliction.'

"The object of his solicitude now entered, leading her little Emily, who ran to her papa, and throwing her little arms round his neck, she said, 'I am so glad that we are going away from nasty, smokey London; but I am sorry it is because you are ill; yes indeed, dear papa, I am.' Montague folded her tenderly in his arms, and as his lips pressed her rosy cheek, the starting tear evinced his emotion.

When Fielding arose to take leave, Montague was greatly affected. The debility of his frame, added to the contending feelings that agitated him, proved too much for his exhausted nature; his breast heaved heavily, and sobbing violently, he sunk back on the sofa.

"Emma, accustomed to these paroxisms of emotion in her husband, retained her usual composure. She bid Fielding depart, fearing that his presence would probably contribute

rather to increase than diminish the malady; and then with fond and affectionate attention, she administered the balm of consolation to her afflicted Montague.

"As a last expedient, she depended on the effect that change of air and scene would produce. They directed their route to the North of Wales; and at the end of three weeks, arrived at Beaumaris in Anglesea.

"During this journey, Emma, who had never before seen any thing half so romantic, expressed the most lively astonishment. She was an enthusiastic admirer of nature; but her delight was converted into terror, as they passed the road, that lies across the high mountain of Penmanmawr.

"On one side, the impending rock seemed ready every instant to threaten inevitable destruction; while on the other, hung over the sea, an immense and unguarded precipice. The scene

so hideously terrific, alarmed our travellers, who sat in profound silence. At intervals their ears were assailed by the violent splash of large fragments of broken rock, which the fury of the wind precipitated into the watery abyss beneath.

" Ascending from the rich vallies that abound in the northern part of Wales, and which exhibited at this season of the year, a particularly pleasing aspect, her attention was engaged by scenes less terrific, though equally grand and imposing.

Here the landscape gradually disclosed to her observing eye, new and perpetual beauties. Extensive woods, embellished by the soft and varied tint of autumn, partially interspersed with ruins of ancient grandeur and magnificence, recalled to her mind the feuds of ancient times, when the brave Lewellyn, driven from the island of Anglesea, by the tyrannical Edward,

sought refuge amidst the hills of his oppressed country, as a last resource against the invasions of his inveterate enemy.

"In vain did Emma endeavour to call her husband's attention to those objects that afforded her so much delight—nothing roused him. He sat in an apparent stupor, and if perchance any sudden exclamation from his wife induced him to notice any strikingly beautiful view, he the next moment returned to his reclining posture, seemingly averse to repeat the exertion.

'A few years since,' thought Emma, 'the limited prospects around Harrow delighted him, but now——' She could not bear the reflection, and eagerly sought, in the caresses and engaging prattle of her little girl, to bury the melancholy ideas that oppressed her.

"They remained a very short time at Beaumaris, the air being too keen for Montague; and again becoming

travellers, they bent their course southward. On approaching Caermarthen, Emma was particularly struck with a beautiful villa, situate about a mile from that town. A board, fastened at the gate, signifying that the property was to be either let or sold, led her to admit a hope of procuring it, and she spoke immediately to her husband on the subject. Ever ready to oblige, he purposed making enquiry respecting the house in question, and found that it had been vacant only one month.

"The extreme beauty of the situation rendered it an object of such general admiration, that he found it necessary to lose no time in making the application. The estate belonged to N. Morgan, Esq. a gentleman of large private property. To him Mr. Wallace wrote, and received a favorable answer. 'He said that Llyndridge, was quite at his (Mr. Wallace's) disposal, provided that on inspecting the house, it meet with

his approbation. He named his intention of calling the following day, and kindly offered to accompany Mr. and Mrs. Wallace to Llyndridge, whenever they could make it agreeable.' The succeeding morning was fixed on for the excursion, and at the appointed hour the party set out.

"The house was situated on the declivity of a hill, commanding an open and extensive prospect. A verdant and beautiful lawn, that promised to afford ample scope for Emily's sports, was bounded on either side by a thick plantation of firs and evergreens. On the left wing of the house, stood a conservatory. The frames of the windows were of carved wood of exquisite workmanship, and encompassed by pillars on which were inscribed the heroic deeds of those ancient heroes, who so long struggled with the Norman and Roman powers, forming on the whole, a beautiful effect.

"On the west side, beyond the plantation, rose in gradual sublimity, a rich and ornamental wood. A ridge of rocks, transposed in pleasing irregularity, were seen at the basis of the trees, whose lofty branches, as if to hide this unadorned mass of stone, stooped their majestic heads, and laved the glassy surface of the river, that flowing through the neighbouring country, fertilized and enriched its banks.

"Immediately in front of the house, the town of Caermarthen presented itself; and in the south eastern direction, were discernible in the distance, some extensive ruins, in which Mr. Morgan said some remains of Roman architecture were still to be traced.

"The mansion large and commodious, was in every respect suited to the tastes of Mr. and Mrs. Wallace, who hesitated not to purchase the whole immediately.'

'No pecuniary sacrifice can be too

great,' said Emma, 'to procure such a residence as this; it surpasses any thing I ever saw;' and turning to her husband, she called his attention to the beautiful scenery around them. 'What food for my pencil Montague, and what amusement will the contemplation of this lovely enchanting spot afford us in the summer, when you are sufficiently recovered to enjoy it.' 'But you have not yet seen all that appertains to your intended residence,' said Mr. Morgan.

"Emma expressed a desire to defer a further view of the property at present, on account of her husband, who would not however permit her to deny herself the gratification; and accepting Mr. Morgan's offer of a room, in which there was a good fire, he kept Emily with him, while Mrs. Wallace, attended by her polite and agreeable campanion, set out to explore the possessions of which she already longed to be mistress.

" The gardens, that from their oblique situation, were particularly fertile and productive, Emma considered an essential acquisition. She was also much delighted to hear from Mr. Morgan, that the two adjoining fields were for sale, Montague having been recommended by his London physicians, the use of a great quantity of new milk, and this pasture land would enable her to keep cows without the slightest inconvenience.

' No situation in the world,' said Mrs. Wallace, ' could to me be so attractive or desirable as this; but there is still one thing to be considered, Mr. Morgan, and one indeed of such infinite importance, that the result of my enquiries on that head will alone determine my stay in this part of the country—Does Caermarthen afford a man of eminence in the medical profession?—for Mr. Wallace's health is so very precarious, that I should be wretched if not satisfied on this point.'

'There is not only an eminent surgeon, madam,' replied Mr. Morgan, 'but Dr. T—— as a physician, is a man of the highest ability; therefore quiet your anxieties, and rely on my assurance: I speak not only from general report, but experimentally, having myself derived the greatest relief from these gentlemen's physical talents, in two dangerous disorders. I trust however that the healthy air of this country, will be productive of a favorable change in Mr. Wallace. Has he been long an invalid, madam?'

"Emma then related to Mr. Morgan the circumstances of Montague's alarming attack, and at the same time expressed an earnest desire to rouse him, by some artificial means, from the low nervous state in which he had sunk.

'To electricity he will not be prevailed on to submit; and the very indifferent and dormant manner, with which he beheld the romantic scenes that presented themselves during our

journey, forbids my dwelling any longer on the happy effects I had anticipated from change of scene. All appears equally uninteresting to his once lively imagination; and bitter and heart rending as the retrospect is, still I dare not flatter myself that he will ever be better.'

"They had now reached the house, and having offered to Mr. Morgan their grateful acknowledgments for his polite and kind attention, Mr. and Mrs. Wallace returned to the hotel. Emma, anxious to become settled, employed herself so diligently in furnishing her house, and making the necessary arrangements, that in less than a fortnight every thing was ready for their reception.

"No one enjoyed the change more than Emily. Full of life and spirits, she skipped over the adjoining fields, to gather the cowslip and violet, those spontaneous harbingers of spring.

Exercise improved her health, and for this reason Mrs. Wallace was induced rather to encourage than to restrain her child's inclinations. But in Montague no visible alteration took place, or if there were any, it was for the worse. His bodily strength appeared gradually to decline; his appetite failed; and the hectic flush that glowed on his emaciated cheek, too plainly evinced symptoms of a decline.

"For a long time Emma persisted in discrediting the opinion of the medical attendants; but at length she was obliged, though reluctantly, to acknowledge them right. Day after day, saw her husband weaker and weaker. All human aid was declared to be fruitless, and she now thought it her duty to attend more to his spiritual than to his bodily welfare.

"The trial was hard, and much she doubted her ability to support it. But the words of St. Paul came to her

relief, and she repeated the blessed assurance, with feelings of gratitude, to that 'God who is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted, above that we are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.'

'If our inclination to love this world, were not corrected,' says an elegant writer, 'we should soon give up that heart to the creature, which is due only to the Creator. We should consider this probationary state as our home, and forget that we are but pilgrims upon earth, and that our journey will quickly come to an end.' The truth of this observation must come home to every Christian heart.

"We are indeed too apt to fix our affections on the things of this world; and were it not for the wholesome lessons that affliction teaches, the number of unrepenting sinners, would, I fear, be more considerable, than they are at

present. But when struggling under the weight of some heavy misfortune, our frail natures find it extremely difficult to listen to the friendly admonitions of the Gospel. We consider our own lot more severe than that of any other persons. We forget the hand that bestowed the blessing about to be taken from us; and instead of gratefully adoring the infinite Giver of benefits, we murmur because he thinks fit to recal what is his own.

"How sinful is the encouragement of such unjustifiable complaints; and yet our compassionate Saviour pities, instead of condemning, our infirmities. He looks upon us as weak and frail mortals, ignorant of what will conduce to our eternal welfare.

"Far from punishing our temerity, he guards and watches over our souls, with unremitting care; feels for our distresses, and intercedes in our behalf with his Almighty Father, 'who de-

sireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live.' Can such inimitable virtue, such unrivalled excellence, be sufficiently adored?

All glorious God, thy love o'erpow'rs me;
Make me holy, just, and good,
Teach my heart to love and fear thee,
Strengthen me with heav'nly food.

" The natural firmness of Mrs. Wallace's mind, the superiority of her judgment, and the excellency of her understanding, which hitherto had never forsaken her, now gave way to feelings of the bitterest despair.

" The view of futurity offered to her disconsolate imagination, nothing but one continued and dreary prospective. ' Life without my husband,' she mentally exclaimed, ' will be a blank—a blank that nothing can ever fill up. Day will succeed to day, month to month, and year to year—but each

day, each month, each year, will bring no comfort to this agonized bosom! My happiness, and the lifeless form of my husband, will descend to the grave together, never, never to be recalled! But oh!' she said, her countenance illuminated with angelic rapture, and her hands and eyes lifted up in silent adoration, 'cause thy heavenly spirit to descend—fortify my beloved Montague with the shield of faith—clothe him in the robes of thy righteousness—and make him a happy partaker of thy glorious kingdom: then, when the time appointed for my departure shall come, bless me, me also, oh, my Father, and make us partakers together of the promised bliss of immortality.'

"Montague after this period lingered but a very few days. The evening before he died, Mr. A—— the clergyman, was sent for, who, on his arrival, administered the sacrament, and after-

wards discoursed some time with Mr. Wallace, on the eternal welfare of his soul.

'The soul,' said Montague, emphatically; 'Oh, my friend, how invaluable is the soul! and how much more care do we bestow on its earthly tabernacle, 'which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven,' than on that immortal part, which exists through all eternity. Eternity! that dread word, who can comprehend the full extent of its meaning? Alas! I have sinned far beyond the hope of pardon! My youthful days unmarked by care and sorrow, were passed in the eager enjoyment of sensual and fleeting pleasures. Religion was unheeded, or if thought on for a moment, was as quickly forgotten;

"And like the baseless fabric of a vision,
Left not a wreck behind.'"

Can such a contemplation admit one ray of consolation, or one satisfying

hope?' 'God is merciful,' said Mr. A———, 'and has in our Saviour's resurrection, given us the pledge of a blessed immortality. Through the blood of his son we are cleansed, and through his intercession, the repentant sinner will find pardon and forgiveness at the throne of mercy.' 'Blessed assurance! heavenly promise!' said Montague; 'And may I dare to expect that God will deign to accept my humble supplications? Merciful Providence, how infinite is such goodness! Yet, my friend, earnestly as I desire to withdraw my thoughts wholly from worldly objects, still the feelings of nature will prevail. This,' he added, drawing his wife towards him, and fondly embracing her, 'this is the tie that alone produces in me any desire to live. My thoughts have long been weaned from the follies and trifles that once too fully employed them; and oh, Emma, dearest and best beloved of my heart, let the

hope of a speedy and eternal re-union be your comfort and support. I rest on the rock of Christ with confidence and hope. The nearer death approaches, the less terrible it appears; feeling assured that the good shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep, will forgive my wanderings, and admit me into his blessed fold.'

"Exhausted, he now sunk back in the arms of his wife, who endeavoured in vain to suppress the feelings that agitated her. Sobs checked her utterance, as she gazed on the colourless features of her dying husband.

"At length recovering himself a little, he said, 'Let me bless my Emily, she will very soon be deprived of an earthly parent, but above there is a heavenly one, he will be her father and her friend. May she, my adored Emma, prove a comfort to your widowed heart: may she supply the place of a tender husband.' The child was now brought in

and given into the arms of her father. Pressing her affectionately to his bosom, he lifted his eyes towards heaven, and solemnly offered a prayer for her present and everlasting welfare.

"Poor little Emily not comprehending the scene before her, cried to see her mother's distress. 'Happy, innocent age,' said Montague, when she was gone, 'unconscious of future evil, she anticipates no sorrow, and dwells only on the present. If Emma, she resembles you in excellence as in person, I fear not for the eternal welfare of my child; such virtue must meet its due reward.'

"The night was now far advanced, still Mr. A——— remained: he saw that an awful change had taken place in his friend, and that death was near at hand. Anxiety for Mrs. Wallace therefore prevented his leaving her; and as he foreboded, the morning beamed on the corpse of Montague: he expired in

the arms of his afflicted wife, pronouncing with fervor, 'I am accepted of the Lord.'

"Here, my dear children," rejoined Mrs. B. after a short pause, "I will draw a veil over the distress of Mrs. Waliace, it can better be imagined than described. To religion however she flew for consolation, and in the promises of her Saviour, found that she sought. 'Ask, and it shall be given you,' says the scripture; 'seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.'

"Time, and a good conscience, tended to ameliorate the sufferings of poor Mrs. Wallace. The soothing voice of religion, armed her with courage and resolution, not only to support her present heavy affliction, but it also fortified her mind against the dread and apprehension of future ones.

"The sum of what I would here express, is so elegantly compiled by the late William Melmoth, Esq. in his treatise on the great importance of a religious life, that I cannot hope better to enforce the subject, than by giving the words of that excellent man. 'It is certain,' says he, 'that whatever the great of this world may think, nothing can alleviate the pressure of worldly troubles, but a religious life. It is that, and that alone, which is a sufficient counterpoise to balance the weight of any severe affliction; nothing else is sufficient to support a man in the evil days of his pilgrimage, and to sustain his spirit under the most oppressive calamities of this life; all other experiments, how promising soever, will be found vain and ineffectual.'

"The gay and fashionable part of mankind not only neglect religion themselves, but too frequently make a point of persecuting and wounding by the

arrows of slander, those who may happen to think differently from themselves. A serious Christian is generally pointed and scoffed at, as a methodist or a saint, or some other like appellation is sarcastically applied to him. By such bright examples of virtue, however, these darts of malignity are unheeded; or if observed, are treated with the contempt they merit.

"Mrs. Wallace, having by means of reason and reflection, divested her mind in some measure of the sharp anguish her husband's death had occasioned, wisely resolved to have every moment of her time fully employed. She undertook the entire instruction of her daughter, who every day disclosed some new charm, either mental or personal.

"To represent her as being faultless, would be incredible; she was addicted to error, as all mortals are, more or less. Thanks however to her excellent mother, who corrected those errors as soon as perceived: Emily was

less inclined than children generally are, to those evil propensities so inherent in the youthful character. She was docile, and affectionate; intelligent, and engaging; enthusiastic to a degree, in the admiration of a person that pleased her; but violent, and inveterate, in her dislikes. This effervescent imagination, Mrs. Wallace took infinite pains to check, because she feared that by the indulgence of it, her child would, in traversing the thorny paths of life, create herself numerous enemies.

"To divest her mind of those desponding ideas, that a constant presentation of objects, connected with her late husband, occasioned, Mrs. Wallace occupied herself in superintending the erection of a cottage in the second field from her house. There, when completed, she took up her abode; and not long after, as she was one evening enjoying the freshness of the air, in a

walk with Emily, she encountered a lady, whose appearance struck her forcibly.

"The stranger was habited in deep mourning, a black crape veil, entirely concealed her features, but her form was elegant and commanding; she passed rapidly by, seemingly averse to being noticed. The following morning, as was her wonted custom, Mrs. Wallace paid a visit to the grave of her husband. She was dejectedly resting on the railings that enclosed the monument, when her sorrowful meditations were interrupted by the cry of a little girl, who exclaimed 'Oh, mamma, my dear mamma is hurt!' Emma immediately flew to the spot from whence the sound proceeded, and found that the child had cause for alarm. The lady who had so forcibly attracted her attention the day before, was seated on the ground, evidently in much pain: one hand supported her head, while

with the other she clasped the little girl to her bosom, endeavouring to compose her with the assurance that she was not hurt.

"At the sight of a stranger, she started, but immediately recovering herself, she politely answered Mrs. Wallace's enquiries, and assured her that the injury was trifling. A tile that had fallen from the roof of the church, had in its descent, struck Mrs. Mansfield on the head. 'It has caused,' she said, 'a disagreeable sensation, but I have no doubt that it will shortly pass off again.'

"On endeavouring to rise, however, she became so giddy, that had not Mrs. Wallace caught her, she must have inevitably fallen to the ground. Her residence was at some distance, and after great persuasion, finding herself unable to move without assistance, she was prevailed on to accept an asylum in Llyndridge cot, until a little recover-

ed. The recovery however was retarded, 'And to this accident,' said Mrs. Wallace, when she had concluded her history, 'am I indebted for the possession of that friend, whose transcendent virtues render her invaluable. The attachment that subsists between us is indissoluble. Happy in each other's affection, we seek not the favour of the world—misfortune has weaned us from its pleasures; and in the bosom of pure and lasting friendship, we find that delight which is alone attendant on the true votaries of so invaluable a possession.'

"Thus, my dear children, ends Mr. and Mrs. Wallace's narration. In recounting the incidents of their lives, I have observed accuracy and minuteness—I have studied to combine instruction with entertainment, and may I hope that my labour will not be wholly unavailing? Sometimes let their misfortunes be reviewed and re-

flected on. Like the amiable woman whose virtues you so highly admire, endeavour to bear the storms of adversity with submission, and the sun-shine of prosperity with gratitude, ever remembering that that God, whose over-ruling hand 'directeth all things both in heaven and earth,' can better judge than ourselves, what is conducive to our present and everlasting happiness.

"Should no unforseen occurrence arise to disturb the peace of our domestic circle, I will to-morrow evening commence the relation of Mrs. Mansfield's history, of whom I dare say you all long to be informed."

The little girls individually expressing an anxious hope for the morrow, retired to their respective apartments; and the duties of the following day having been satisfactorily performed, they all assembled to claim their mother's promise, who ever ready to comply with the requests of her children, began as follows.

" Mr. and Mrs. Sullivan were of ancient Irish extraction. For several years they resided in Dublin, but on the death of Mr. S. his widow, whose feelings ill accorded with the retired manner of living, to which, during her husband's life time, she had been obliged to submit, prepared, as soon as common decency would authorize such a step, to dispose of her effects by sale. Possèssing a handsome income, she repaired, with her two daughters, to that vortex of dissipation, the metropolis of England, where she was speedily settled in a handsome house in Portman Square, surrounded by every luxury that wealth could purchase, or imagination suggest. Here she was very soon waited on by those votaries of fashion, those associates with folly, with which the capital so plentifully abounds.

" Of a morning, her house was filled with visitors of every degree of rank and splendour, and her tables strewed

with cards of invitation from these her new associates. Mrs. Sullivan was delighted; she spoke in raptures of the extreme civility, the pointed attentions, with which she was treated, little imagining that wealth was the principal, nay, the only recommendation, that procured her the homage she so highly estimated.

"Weak woman! her vanity was flattered, reason was overthrown, and she dwelt alone on the singular charms she must necessarily possess, to have attracted such universal admiration.

"Her eldest daughter Mary, was plain in person, but remarkably elegant and pleasing in manners. She did not attract instantaneous admiration, but it was impossible long to converse with her, without being irresistibly compelled to admire the superiority of her mind. From her excellent father she had imbibed the principles of virtue and religion; and so highly did she

respect his memory, that the conduct of her mother, who she considered had overstepped the bounds of propropriety, and even of common decency, in associating so soon with the gay world, shocked and mortified her extremely.

"Caroline, about two years younger than herself, was the reverse of her sister in every respect. Cast in nature's perfect mould, she united to one of the most lovely and expressive countenances, a form of faultless symmetry. Her amazing personal attractions soon became the theme of general admiration, and before the family had been a month in town, Mrs. Sullivan had the supreme gratification of hearing her daughter pronounced the reigning belle of the metropolis. The morning papers teemed with flattering eulogiums on the transcendent beauty of this modern Venus, Miss Caroline Sullivan; and any new dress she wore, was immediately adopted as the height of fashion.

"Like her mother, whose idol she was, her love of gaiety was unbounded. Adulation being necessary to her existence, she sought after and embraced with eager avidity, the insipid and unmeaning compliments of every fashionable lounger who would take the pains to proffer them. Thus pursuing the road to perdition, she passed her days in idleness and folly, while her more amiable sister, who accounted such a continued course of dissipation, not only culpable, but highly reprehensible, spent much time alone, having resolved to devote twelve months to retirement, as a mark of respect to her dear father's memory. She rejected all society, excepting that of Mrs. Belmont, a young widow, whose husband had been suddenly cut off in the prime of life, a very short time after their marriage.

"So heavy an affliction had given to the general manners of this lady, a tincture of melancholy, calculated to

inspire a warm and lively interest. It was pleasing to Mary, and she eagerly sought her acquaintance, as one whose tastes and habits assimilated with her own.

" Bitter and mortifying as the conviction was, still she could not but acknowledge her sister's inability to perform the sacred duties of a friend. Gaiety and dissipation engrossed her time, monopolized her every thought, and by its overwhelming influence, expelled from her mind all the finer feelings of humanity and affection. Pleased and gratified by the fulsome praises of the base flatterer, she rejected with scorn the kind and friendly admonitions of her sister.

" An infatuated imagination led her to think the warnings of prudence excitements of jealousy; and unawed by the stings of conscience, unwarned by the voice of friendship, she lavished her time in sinful indulgence,

regardless of the present, heedless of the future. The meridian sun generally beamed its heavenly rays on the sleeping forms of Mrs. Sullivan and her youngest daughter. The hours of night having been spent in the crowded assembly, langour and fatigue pervaded their bodies, and disqualified them for exertion: whereas the amiable, the neglected Mary, blooming in solitary seclusion, partook in the society of her friend Mrs. Belmont, of all the sweets of domestic and rational enjoyment.

"The early part of their mornings were generally devoted to visiting the destitute poor, of whom they relieved a certain number annually. Of what good would it not be productive, if every young, unoccupied female, would like them remember, and practice their example, and instead of wasting their time in the pursuit of selfish and extravagant pleasures, would, in imitation of

these exemplary young women, devote some portion of it to instructing the ignorant and unlearned.

"In this world, some are in affluence, others in poverty; some are gifted with great natural endowments, others are totally deprived of them. Such is the ordination of God, and being so, ought not the affluent to succour the poor and distressed? Ought not the highly endowed individual, to impart his knowledge to the more uninformed race of mankind? The Scripture tells us, that 'unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.' Pride like all other sins, has its dwelling in the heart, and it must be acknowledged, is one of the most prevailing vices inherent in man.

"The worldly great too often make riches their God, and in consequence of having been endowed in greater abun-

dance than others, with wealth, the advantages of birth, education, knowledge, or personal accomplishments, are apt to indulge themselves in uncharitable deeds, and unfeeling language, to their fellow-creatures; but let such remember, that 'a man's pride shall bring him low, but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.'

"The advantages of rank, honors, beauty, or wealth, when perverted to evil or uncharitable purposes, cannot be productive of any solid, or lasting happiness: and those who foolishly rest their hopes on the mere possession of them, will find too late, that in their short-lived enjoyment of mere earthly things, they catch at the substance, but grasp only a shadow. But to return to my story. Mrs. Belmont being confined to the house by a violent cold, Mary, in pursuance of her accustomed practice, set out one morning alone to perform her daily occupation.

She entered the humble lodging of a very old woman, who relied almost entirely for subsistence on the benevolent generosity of our young friends, her age and extreme debility rendering her unfit for labour.

"She was subject to spasms, and had the preceding night been attacked with more than usual violence. Alarmed at her situation, Mary immediately dispatched the servant for Mr. Downes, her mother's medical attendant. He soon arrived, and administered an anodyne that afforded temporary relief. Promising to call again in the evening, she then proceeded to Mrs. Belmont's, where she dined, but refused remaining late, on account of fulfilling her promise to the afflicted invalid.

"Wishing to devote some time to the aged sufferer, she dismissed her servant at the door, ordering him to fetch her in a carriage at an appointed hour, and then ascended the delapidated stair-

case. On entering the room, a spectacle presented itself, calculated to inspire a much less sensitive mind than Mary's, with horror and commiseration, poor Lucy was labouring under the influence of a strong convulsion. From the violence of the attack her features were frightfully distorted, her limbs contracted, her whole countenance had assumed the hue of death, and struggling in the midst of her pangs, she uttered the most heart-rending shrieks and groans.

"Unaccustomed to scenes of the kind, Mary recoiled from the disfigured object before her, but instantly recollecting the necessity of immediate relief, she recalled her wandering fortitude, and checking the repugnant feelings of her heart, kindly offered to support the pillow of the sufferer, while the attendant ran for Mr. Downes. When alone, she contemplated with pity and compassion, the objects that surrounded her, and as she surveyed

the comfortless abode of poverty, she could not help reflecting on the vanity of mankind.

'Ah!' she mentally exclaimed, 'how many are there who would shrink with abhorrence from a scene like this, and would think themselves contaminated by entering the humble, unadorned habitation of this poor woman. But in heaven 'The rich and poor meet together.: the Lord is the maker of them all:' '*there* will be no respect of persons,' and ere this day has closed, may not the sun of poor Lucy be set in glory? may she not have exchanged this mortal body for one of immortality, and be equal in glory to the angels? Arrayed in the pure vesture of holiness, she may, like Lazarus, be carried into Abraham's bosom, while the rich, the wealthy sensualist, having served the mammon of unrighteousness more than God, shall like the rich man in the parable, lift up his eyes, being in tor-

ments, and vainly cry for a share of that mercy which is the possession of his once poor, but now enviable friend.

'Could the dissipated votaress of fashion, be for a moment transported to this abode of poverty and distress, how self-condemned, how criminal would she appear, even in her own estimation.

'Stretched on the downy bed of luxury and affluence, intoxicated with the enjoyment of unhallowed and deceitful pleasures, she casts not a thought on the miseries or hardships of her fellow-creatures. Reared in the nursery of folly, her tender mind is early implanted with that seed, 'which yields no fruit meet for repentance.'

'Carried away by the unrestrained torrent of gaiety and fashion, she gives a loose rein to her licentious inclinations; and checking the spontaneous growth of virtue and sensibility, disregarding the still slight warnings of con-

science, that in the gayest moments will sometimes have birth, she unwarily and unavoidably sinks into the practice of irreligion and immorality.'

Here Mrs. B. paused: the unbidden tear stole from her eye, as with maternal affection she contemplated her own little family, but checking her emotion, she thus proceeded.

"The subject before us, my dear children, is one that calls for our most serious consideration—and oh! let the admonitions of a tender and affectionate parent sink deep into your hearts. You are now unsophisticated in the ways of the deceitful world, may you ever remain so; but should the varying scenes of life ever expose you to its baneful influence, let me intreat you, as you value the salvation of your souls, to pray that God of his infinite mercy, will shield you from its vices and temptations.

"There are thousands, who like birds

of prey, continually hover about, seeking whom they may devour; and if in their course, they unfortunately light on the child of innocence and simplicity, they rejoice in the hope of sacrificing an additional victim to their unlawful pursuits; and, regardless of the means necessary for the accomplishment of their diabolical design, they cease not their persecutions, until by art and dissimulation, the once uncorrupted and unvitiated heart of virtuous simplicity, is devoted to the shrine of folly and lasting wretchedness. But I will return to Mary, whom we left in the dwelling of poor Lucy. The situation was trying, and caused no little agitation in the breast of our heroine.

" She kept her eyes fixed on the livid countenance of her aged friend. All symptoms of life had apparently departed, and only by casual and convulsive motion, could she perceive that the form before her was more than the

inanimated remnant of mortality. Suddenly a change took place, and those features that just before had caused to the observer a feeling of horror and dread, were in a moment disrobed of their ghastliness, and assumed an expression of mild and angelic resignation. She opened her dying eyes, and fixing them earnestly on her benefactress, exhibited strong signs of recognition; then again closing them, she faintly ejaculated, 'Lord into thy hands I commend my spirit,' and sighing deeply, sunk back on her pillow, and immediately expired.

" The transition was awful and sudden. For a moment Mary sat in mournful contemplation over the corpse of her departed friend, but oppressed by the violence of her feelings, which she was unable to controul, she at length sunk on the floor in a state of insensibility.

"On recovering she was surprised to find herself supported in the arms of a gentleman, a stranger, who was endeavouring by the application of restoratives, to regain her wandering senses. Confused at her situation, she hastily arose, and was on the point of seeking an explanation, when, happening to turn her eyes towards the bed, where lay the mortal remains of poor Lucy, every painful recollection returned with redoubled force, and she again relapsed into a state of perfect insensibility.

"Re-awakening at length to the use of her faculties, she found herself in her mother's house, surrounded by her own domestics. All that had passed appeared like a dream; her imagination was disturbed, and she could recal to her recollection only a confused remembrance of the events that had transpired.

"From her servants she learned that

Mr. Downes and another gentleman, had accompanied her to Queen Square in a carriage; that Mr. Downes had remained in the house until he was assured of her recovery, but that being in haste he was now departed.

"The following morning still feeling very unwell, she sent to request Mrs. Belmont would come to her, who, tenderly anxious for her friend, immediately obeyed the summons. To her Mary recounted as explicitly as she was able, the incidents that had occurred since their separation.

'Who the stranger could be, in whose arms I found myself supported,' she said, 'and who was so kindly endeavouring to recover me, I cannot conceive. As nearly as I can recollect he was young and handsome; but how such a personage could, at so unseasonable an hour, be transported to the humble dwelling of poor Lucy, is an enigma I cannot solve.'

'Nor can I,' replied Mrs. Belmont; 'to me the circumstance appears equally singular, and bordering on mystery; but here comes a person who will doubtless be able to satisfy our curiosity, and at the same instant Mr. Downes entered.

"Mary smiling, begged him to unravel the secret that so greatly perplexed both herself and friend. 'Woman's curiosity you know, my dear sir,' she said, 'is unbounded. I therefore, possessing in no small degree the weakness of my sex, declare, that unless you divest my mind of the obscurity that envelopes it, respecting the stranger with whom you found me in Lucy Lepson's dwelling, all attempts to effect the cure of your patient will be useless.'

'For my own credit then,' replied Mr. Downes, 'I wish I could gratify your request; but indeed, as far as relates to the name or occupation of your

unknown hero, I am as much in the dark as yourself. When I arrived at the poor woman's house, a coach was at the door, into which a young and elegant man was assisting you. I immediately made myself known as your medical attendant, and offered my services to attend you home. He politely bowed, informed me that he had accidentally found you alone, and in a state of perfect insensibility; that feeling for your situation, and being unable to find out your residence, he was about to convey you to his aunt, from whom he assured me you would receive every possible attention. I thanked him in your name for his kindness, but aware that you would prefer being in your mother's house, I took the liberty of rejecting his proposal. He accompanied you here, and during the ride, expressing a desire to know my name, I gave him my card, but wholly engrossed by his fair charge, or

unwilling to satisfy my curiosity, both the action and intimation were alike unheeded. In a day or two, I have no doubt, that your enquiries will be more successful, for his anxiety will, I am confident, induce him, ere long, to gain some intelligence of you.'

"The allusion afforded Mary no little amusement; but although she laughed at the joke, still she could not entirely suppress her desire to know or hear something more relative to the interesting stranger. Several days however passed on in like incertitude. The interment of poor Lucy took place. Mrs. Belmont called to offer her assistance in defraying the funeral expences, but she was informed that all had already been settled, and that proper persons had been directed by a friend of the deceased, to superintend and see every thing conducted decently, and respectably. That the interesting unknown was Lucy's bene-

factor, neither Mary nor Mrs. Belmont for a moment doubted; 'but who can it be?' was a query that still remained unsolved.

"The following morning, as our heroine was busily employed in her study, she was surprised by a visit from her sister, who appeared in high spirits.

'To what good fortune am I indebted for your presence at this early hour?' asked Mary, 'surely something extraordinary must have occurred to occasion such wonderful exertion.'

'No,' replied Caroline, 'nothing extraordinary has yet occurred; but if your antiquated ideas permit your assenting to the proposal I am about to make, surely I shall be justified in pronouncing it an extraordinary coincidence, and on your part a most wonderful exertion.'

With enquiring eyes, Mary demanded an explanation. Caroline continued. 'My mother and self yester-

day met at the Countess of L——'s auction, Lady Louisa Baxter. You may probably have heard of her; she is a woman who ranks high in the scale of fashion.'

'I recollect some time since,' returned Mary, 'reading an account in the paper, of a divorce that had taken place between a lady of that name, and her husband; but decidedly it was not the same person, she was a woman of very depraved character, and would not of course be admitted into the higher circles.'

'O my dear, good Mary,' replied Caroline, laughing heartily, 'what a perfect Lady Prudentia you are! Bless me, these things are not thought of in the fashionable world; a casual *faux pas*, nothing more. Why you would not surely carry your precision so far as to condemn every poor woman to exile, because she was so unfortunate as to meet with one of

your domesticated husbands, who is never content unless his wife is for ever by his side. Such animals, they are not fit for creation! I do detest what is generally termed a good husband! But putting them out of the question at present, I will proceed to make known my wishes. Miss Mansfield, a younger sister of Lady Louisa's, is just arrived in town, accompanied by her brother and nephew. This lady, I understand, is the very opposite of her bewitching sister. Reared in seclusion, her ideas are quite *a la rustique;* and she has an aversion to every thing like fashion or gaiety. Not so her nephew; he is just returned with his father from the continent, and Lady Louisa tells us is a gem of no inconsiderable value. His connections we know are good, his fortune will be affluent, his personal accomplishments, we are led to understand, of the first order; and besides these numerous ac-

quirements, there is still one that far exceeds them all, at the death of a distant relation, a Sir John Mansfield, this Mr. Henry, will, as only heir, succeed to the title, provided he outlives his father; and oh!' she added, clasping her hands in rapture, 'what unspeakable charms a title possesses! How such an object for admiration could have escaped my searching glance, I cannot conceive, but so it is, for Lady Louisa says that he is perpetually intreating his aunt to procure an introduction to Mrs. Sullivan, for he is particularly desirous of her daughter's acquaintance. In order therefore to gratify his wishes, my mother has, through Lady Louisa, sent cards to Miss Mansfield, her brother, and nephew, for to-morrow evening, when we have a large party; and in case the former should perchance be induced to accept the invitation, I have to intreat that you will oblige me by spending the evening in the drawing room, for to me

it would be most painful, to have to entertain such a person, as from all accounts she is; one that is absolutely averse to any thing like pleasure or amusement, and more than likely, deficient in conversation. Indeed I *cannot* do it, I should be quite out of my element; besides I mean to flirt a little with Henry Mansfield; and positively Mary, you must accede for once to my desire. I shall, believe me, consider your compliance a favor, but if you refuse, I shall feel convinced that you are instigated to do so from motives of jealousy.'

'You would greatly wrong me, my dear Caroline,' said Mary, 'in harbouring such an idea. I hope I am free from such a dangerous and detestable passion, and in order to convince you that I should feel pleasure in witnessing the happiness you promise yourself, I will engage to comply with your request, though in doing so I

act very contrary to my inclination. If I may be allowed to give an opinion in this affair, let me entreat you, my dear sister, not to form too hasty a determination. Recollect that the man you marry, will be your companion for life; that wealth, beauty, or titles, are valueless, when compared to the higher and more solid attainments of the mind. They will not purchase happiness. True love must be founded in pure friendship, and solid esteem, and the heart that is capable of cherishing the sentiment, must necessarily possess a proper sense of religion and virtue.'

'Stop, stop, my prosing Mary, you throw cold water on every thing; probably Mr. Henry Mansfield may personate that model of perfection; but if so, depend on it Caroline will quickly dismiss him from her train; such—— but my mother calls, adieu *pour le present*,' so saying she flew down stairs,

leaving Mary to enjoy her own reflections.

'I sincerely wish,' she mentally exclaimed, 'that I could see Caroline united to a man of principle and good sense; he would, I should hope, have some influence over her mind and actions, which are now sadly perverted and misdirected by fashion. Her personal attractions procuring her the adulation of folly's idle brood, she receives with thoughtless satisfaction the homage of every dangler, without bestowing a passing thought either on his conduct or character.

"By vain prosperity receiv'd,
"To her they vow their truth, and are again believ'd."

I fear therefore, that a man of sense and discrimination, will not seek the affection of one who gives countenance indistinctively to the attentions of the bad and good.

"Here she was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Belmont, to whom

she related the particulars of the meeting between herself and sister.

'I may be wrong,' she added, 'in imputing blame to my mother, but I cannot be blind to her faults. The plan of conduct she is pursuing with Caroline will infallibly prove her ruin, and will, I am persuaded, be the source of much future misery.'

'It is a mistaken indulgence,' returned Mrs. Belmont; 'your mother idolizes her child for her exterior beauty, without bestowing a thought on her mind, the cultivation of which should be her unceasing care. Reason, reflection, nay, even religion, is sacrificed to the vanity of the world.'

'While I,' interrupted Mary, 'not possessing these external and fleeting attractions, am left deserted and unnoticed. Oh, my dear, revered father, how sensibly do I feel the loss of your consoling love; you doted on your Mary, and studied her happiness. But

ought I to repine at the all-wise dispensation of Providence? Ought I selfishly to regret the loss of one, whose virtuous life secured to him the blissful promise of a heavenly inheritance? No! let me rather rejoice in the happy prospect of an eternal reunion; and through the dark view that this vale of life presents, let me, through the merits of my Redeemer, borrow a gleam of celestial hope.'

"Eighteen months had now elapsed since the death of Mr. Sullivan, and Mary had not once entered into company, she therefore looked forward to the ensuing evening with feelings of despondence and regret; seclusion was grateful to her heart, and she reluctantly prepared to relinquish the sweet shades of retirement, for the busy theatre of the gay and fashionable world. Her promise however had been given, and with her a promise was held sacred.

From the description however her sister had given of Miss Mansfield, she cherished a secret hope that in her she should find a rational companion, one not so wholly devoted to sordid enjoyment as the generality of fashion's votarists commonly are, and the anticipation afforded her some little satisfaction.

"Simply, but elegantly attired, she descended to the drawing room, leaning on the arm of her more attractive, but less interesting sister. The contrast was striking. Mary, whose form was tall and commanding, and whose countenance, although plain, wore an expression of mildness and benevolence, looked, as with timid step she joined the observing crowd, an emblem of pure and unsullied modesty, seeking neither the flatterer's adulation, or the attentions of the more virtuous and good. No superfluous ornaments decorated her person; the only jewel

she displayed was a locket, set in brilliants, which hung suspended from her neck by a gold chain; it was the last token of affection she had received from her dear father, and as such she treasured it as invaluable.

"Caroline, on the contrary, whose form comprised every grace that could inspire admiration, and who had resolved that evening to appear particularly attractive, left no art untried that could heighten or embellish the natural elegance of her person. Arrayed in all the splendour of beauty, she mixed with the admiring throng, to claim the homage her charms were so calculated to beget; but while her countenance beamed with a radiant brightness that dazzled the surrounding multitude, still there lingered on it a strong expression of seemingly conscious superiority, that in the mind of virtuous simplicity, divested it of all its native attractions.

"Unable to support the scrutinizing gaze of so many spectators, Mary retreated into a remote corner of the apartment, where however she had not long been seated, when her mother advancing, introduced Mr. and Miss Mansfield.

"In the former she beheld a respectable old gentleman, whose venerable countenance still retained the remains of former beauty. His figure, though bent with age, bore semblance of symmetrical dignity; and as he bowed in acknowledgment of her acquaintance, Mary thought she never before had seen such a mixture of grace and majesty. To Miss Mansfield also, who strikingly resembled her brother, the bloom of youth had given place to years of maturity, but her expression was lively and animated, and her conversation, though calculated to afford delight and entertainment, breathed such a strain of grateful en-

thusiasm, as gave a zest to all she uttered.

"Fully occupied in listening to the well-informed and amusing observations of her companions, Mary had remained perfectly unconscious of either the arrival or departure of visitors, when the name of Mr. Henry Mansfield arrested her attention, and curious to see the object of her sister's zealous eulogy, she looked towards the spot from whence the sound proceeded. Her eye however met the fixed and eager gaze of one whose features were already deeply impressed on her memory. She beheld the stranger, the interesting stranger, who had supported her when she fainted in the dwelling of poor Lucy; her countenance kindled into a lively expression of joyful surprise, which she endeavoured in vain to suppress, and casting her eyes to the ground, she felt her cheek in a moment suffused with blushes and confusion.

"He immediately advanced towards her, and addressing his father with a smile of ineffable sweetness, begged an introduction to Miss Sullivan, and intreated permission to join their circle. Then seating himself by Mary, he added, 'To you, madam, I have to apologize for an apparent freedom that I fear may have been unfavorably construed. Appearances are certainly against me, but the singularity of the circumstances will, I am sure, procure me the pardon of one of the most humane and benevolent of women.'

"So unexpected a eulogium called forth the blush of modesty on the varying cheek of our heroine, who, with increased emotion, demanded an explanation.

'To satisfy your enquiries,' resumed Mr. H. Mansfield, 'will be pleasing and grateful to my feelings, as it will give me an opportunity of exculpating myself in the opinion of her whom I

would most unwillingly have offended, for although I acted from the impulse of that feeling, which compassion for your extremely unpleasant situation dictated, still I fear that ignorant of the facts, you may have accused me of presumption, and perhaps of unjustifiable interference.' 'Your conversation' replied Mary, 'is involved in obscurity; for although I cannot doubt that you refer to the scene which occurred in the lodging of my aged pensioner, still I am perfectly ignorant to what presumptuous, or unjustifiable interference, you allude: my ideas were at that time so confused, and my mind so greatly agitated by the sudden demise of poor Lucy, that I find it impossible to recal to my remembrance any clear recollection of the circumstances.'

'With your permission then Miss Sullivan, I will relate them to you,' replied Mr. Mansfield. Mary acquies-

ced, and he thus proceeded. 'Poor Lucy was for many years a faithful domestic of my mother's; as an infant I was placed under her care, and to her timely interference, and presence of mind, during a fire that raged in the house adjoining that in which we lived, am I indebted for the preservation of my life. Gratitude for so important a service, induced my mother to provide liberally for her future wants. She was accommodated with a neat and comfortable habitation, comparative plenty presided at her board, and every thing around her bore a cheerful and pleasing aspect. Death however, at length, in depriving poor Lucy of her benefactress, bereft my father of an affectionate wife, and me of a tender mother. The severity of the stroke caused in my father a depression of spirits that no medical aid could overcome, and as a dernier resource, travelling was recommended. We departed

for the continent, leaving in the hands af an established lawyer in the town, sufficient sum to supply all Lucy's wants during our absence. This man, however, contrary to our expectations, proved to be a most unprincipled character, and a very short time after we had left the country, decamped, taking with him all the little property of the faithful, but unfortunate Lucy. Reduced from a state of affluence to one of the most abject poverty, she left the neighbourhood, and, notwithstanding the strictest enquiry, I for a long time vainly sought to discover the place of her abode. About a few weeks since, happening accidentally to pass a group of persons who were conversing together, I heard one of them pronounce the name of Lucy Lepsom: my attention was rivetted, and I eagerly made some enquiries respecting her.

'The result of them convinced me that the individual of whom they spoke,

was the object of my long unwearied research; and rejoicing at the incident, I lost no time in procuring a direction to her abode. But, alas! I knew not the scene that awaited me, as with buoyant step I ascended the dark and narrow staircase, anticipating the pleasure poor Lucy would testify at the sight of me. I entered the apartment: judge then the horror of my feelings, for to describe them is impossible. That countenance which had so often beamed at my approach with more than maternal fondness, now no longer breathed the affectionate welcome, or shed the gladsome tear: it was stamped with the hue of death, and bursting into an agony of grief at so unexpected, so melancholy a spectacle, I was in the act of throwing myself beside her, hen your inanimate form met my astonished view. I arose, and fearfully approached: you were perfectly insensible, but by the slight inspiration

which remained, I perceived that you had only fainted. I raised you, and by the application of restoratives, soon effected your recovery. You unclosed your eyes, but happening unfortunately to direct them towards the bed where poor Lucy lay, you again relapsed into a state of insensibility. Conceive my situation! Ignorant of your name, your home, of every thing relative to you, I knew not what plan to adopt, or where to convey you. From this state of wretched uncertainty I was however relieved by the entrance of a domestic, who I immediately dispatched for a coach, which arrived before the messenger returned. From my kind and benevolent aunt, I knew you would receive every possible attention, and purposing to convey you to her, I was assisting you into the coach, when Mr. Downes, your medical attendant arrived. To him I disclosed my intention, which however he thought

proper to decline; and offered himself to accompany you to Portman Square. During the drive, I accidently learnt your name, but the events of the last hour had caused in my mind such labouring emotion, that I could not recal my wandering ideas, and consequently neglected to ascertain by what means I could again hear of you. Bitterly have I since regretted my folly; for independent of the ardent desire I have experienced of explaining to you the motives of my conduct, still there is a weightier, a more important reason, that has actuated me to seek this interview. Words, Miss Sullivan, however strong their import, must fall far short of expressing half the gratitude that fills my bosom, when I reflect on the benevolent assistance afforded to my poor Lucy, by yourself and Mrs. Belmont. Believe me, madam, the consciousness of knowing that the last hours of that valuable creature were soothed

by the kind hand of affectionate humanity, and that she was spared the pain of experiencing the bitter pangs of want and necessity, is a consideration that affords me the most heart-felt satisfaction, and relieves my mind of a load that has long oppressed it. Permit me then to offer to your acceptance the thanks of a grateful heart, and believe that the meed, though poor, breathes the language of sincerity. To Mrs. Belmont also, I am anxious to proffer my acknowledgements; and did I not fear it would be trespassing too much on your goodness, I would request permission to accompany you on your next visit to Russel Square.'

"Here Miss Mansfield, who had hitherto remained silent, joined in the request of her nephew, and expressed a warm desire to pay her respects to Mrs. Belmont. Mary extremely gratified, readily acceded to the united wishes of her new friends. The mor-

row was fixed on for their being put into execution; and the company soon after dispersing, the parties in question separated, mutually pleased with each other.

"The following morning, ere Mrs. Sullivan or Caroline had arisen, Mr. and Miss Mansfield called in Portman Square.

"The weather was delightful, and the walk was rendered doubly agreeable by the enlightened and animated conversation of Mr. Henry Mansfield, replete with anecdote and information. But on Mary's return home, a scene truly different awaited her reception: she found her mother and sister alone in the breakfast-room: they received her companions with politeness and affability, and during their stay conducted themselves with becoming complaisance and attention.

"No sooner however were they departed, than the hypocritical mask of

amiability, which had been so successfully assumed, was thrown off, and she was assailed with the most abusive and reproachful invective. 'So, miss,' exclaimed Mrs. Sullivan, 'this is the deceit you practise is it, this is the result of your base, designing, treacherous arts! And do you dare presume to imagine that your sister, so superior, so *infinitely* superior in every respect to yourself, will submit to such daring presumption, or that I, miss, will permit you to supplant her in the affections of the only man she prefers? No! the insult is unbearable; and I insist on your immediately promising to resign all pretensions to the acquaintance of Mr. Henry Mansfield, or expect to draw down on your head my severe and unalterable displeasure.'

'To any reasonable request, madam,' replied Mary firmly, but respectfully, 'I would not hesitate to comply, because I conceive that although you

have long forgotten the duty of a mother, still I am not sanctioned to resent your unnatural treatment, by obstinately opposing the wishes of a parent; but in the present case I think your injunction as unjustifiable as it is inconsistent, and I here irrevocably declare, that while Mr. Henry Mansfield deems me worthy his notice, I shall not deny myself the gratification of enjoying his society,' so saying she left the room.

"The rage of Mrs. Sullivan and her daughter was unbounded; their pride was hurt, their vanity mortified: hitherto Caroline had been deemed unparalleled in every respect, and sincerely did they regret having drawn Mary from her retirement.

'She will be the cause,' said Mrs. Sullivan, 'of constant dissension; for her father, foolish man, took such pains to impress on her mind his own ridiculous, puritanical principles, that under the cloak of religion she is well

able to disguise the real malignity of her heart; but between ourselves Caroline, I think the better plan will be to treat this Henry Mansfield with the contempt he merits; for surely it is degrading, in one who by a single glance can bring a thousand suppliants at her feet, to bestow a thought on an ignorant undiscerning individual, who thinks proper to disregard your attention.'

'It is not that I care a straw for *him*, mamma,' returned Caroline, her whole countenance expressive of rage and mortification; 'to his esteem, or disesteem, I am equally indifferent; but after having acknowledged to Mary, my determination to attract and rivet his attention, can I bear the humiliating conviction of her being preferred to me; no, it is impossible, absolutely impossible. I will go to Lady Louisa, to her will I impart my grief and vexation; she I know will assist me in carrying my plan into execution, for re-

solved I am to avenge myself of that detested girl—that compound of all that is base and hypocritical.'

"Mrs. Sullivan alarmed at the excessive violence of her daughter, and fearing what in the heat of passion she might be induced to do, endeavoured to divert her ideas into a different channel.

'May we not be too premature my love,' she said, 'in our judgment, probably the attentions of Mr. Mansfield to Mary, may be considered by him as due to her only in common civility.'

'Common civility indeed,' retorted Caroline, and casting a disdainful glance at her mother, left the room.

"But to return to Mary. From the presence of Mrs. Sullivan, she had immediately repaired to the house of her friend Mrs. Belmont; there, in the bosom of affection, she unfolded her sorrows, and sought to alleviate her distress. The cruel aspersions and un-

merited displeasure of her mother, had severely wounded her feelings. Hitherto the perfect seclusion in which she had lived, having afforded little opportunity for social intercourse, she had escaped the virulence of reproach, and to cool contempt, or indifference, she had been too long accustomed now to notice it.

'Let not your spirits be depressed, my love,' said Mrs. Belmont; 'and suffer not the accusations of malignity to affect you. Recollect that whatever sarcasms may be directed against you by the fiend-like instigations of envy, will fail to injure you in the eyes of those whose opinion is valuable. There is a higher power, a protector above; and he who guards the innocent will shield your name from infamy or malice. Be tranquil then, my dear Mary, support your dignity, and let your own excellent judgment be the guide of your actions.'

"In pursuance of this friendly advice, our heroine endeavoured to console herself by the conviction that although bitterly censured, she was innocent of any design either to wound or dishonour the feelings of her sister.

"Each day brought Henry Mansfield and his aunt to Portman Square. In the latter Mary found a heart formed for the sacred repository of friendship; and the former, though regarded in a different light, was not less esteemed or admired. Estimable in character, as elegant and attractive in manners, to know and to love him were simultaneous. In the humane, the benevolent Mary, he beheld a combination of sterling worth, and unexampled virtue. Calculated to adorn the highest stations, yet condescending to visit the abodes of poverty, anxious to relieve the children of adversity, could he daily behold such proofs of mental

excellence, and remain unaffected by them? No, he felt that it was impossible, and feeling, he hesitated not to communicate his sentiments to the object of his admiration. Too sincere to practice dissimulation, Mary attempted not to disguise the real state of her heart, which had long breathed in unison with that of her amiable friend; and while making the disclosure, perhaps never were prospects brighter than in imagination presented themselves to the view of this happy pair; but temporal happiness, so chimerical and fugitive, is the lot of mortals; it is only in the blissful mansions of the redeemed than we can expect to taste the joys of perfect felicity.

"The mutual attachment that subsisted between our young friends, was soon perceived by the eagle-eye of Mrs. Sullivan, who, instead of participating in the happiness such an advantageous alliance offered to her daughter, exhi-

bited proofs of vexation and disappointment, while Caroline, more mortified than she chose to acknowledge, stung with jealousy at the decided preference Mr. Henry Mansfield had given her sister, treated her with the most supercilious contempt. Equally regardless, however, of either sarcasm or reproach, Mary spent many hours of uninterupted felicity, in the society of those she loved. One evening, being assembled at the house of Mrs. Belmont, with Henry Mansfield and his aunt, a letter was brought for the former, the perusal of which created such visible emotion, that Mary anxiously enquired if it contained any unpleasant intelligence. He silently placed it in the hand of his aunt, who read as follows:

'Dear Henry,

'Lose no time in repairing immediately to Keswick. Your father was

yesterday seized with a paralytic stroke, that has entirely deprived him of the use of his faculties.

'How long he may remain in this distressing state, God only knows: he is not, at this moment, conscious of the presence of either myself or my wife; who, scarcely recovered from her late illness, feels the shock very severely. Filial affection will I know prompt you to set off immediately.

'In great haste,

'Your affectionate friend,

'C. B. SELMO.'

Contending emotions for some time kept the whole party silent. Regret for the alarming illness of Mr. Mansfield, whose endearing qualities claimed the respect and esteem of all who knew him, was the predominant feeling.

He was at Keswick on a visit to his neice, the only daughter of a very dear sister; who, on her death-bed, had

committed her child to his care. She had been married several years, during which time Mr. Mansfield had not once paid her a visit, though often entreated to do so.

"Having heard from Mr. Selmo, that his wife was in a very delicate state of health; and himself feeling unequal to the gaieties of a town residence, he had proposed leaving his son in London, during the winter months, and spending them at Keswick with his neice.

"The following spring was fixed on for the marriage of Henry Mansfield; when it was agreed he should take a tour to the Lakes with his bride, join his father, and, having passed through Scotland and Wales, return all together to town in the autumn.

"This arrangement, so agreeable to all parties, was of course, by the present melancholy intelligence, entirely frustrated.

"It was necessary that Henry should

set off immediately; but overcome by anxiety for the life of a tender and affectionate parent, he severely condemned himself for having suffered his father to depart alone; and overwhelmed with grief, he appeared unconscious of any thing around him. In imagination he beheld the form of his father, cold and inanimate, or if still alive, perhaps calling in vain and hopeless anguish, for the presence of his absent son.

"But the first sensation over, a thousand new terrors pervaded his aching breast. Mary, the tender affectionate Mary, arose to his recollection;—how could he leave her, exposed to the malignant persecutions of an inveterate mother and sister. The idea was insupportable; and in a moment of despair, without considering the impracticability of his proposition, he entreated her to consent to an immediate union, and accompany him to Keswick. A little of Mary's sound reasoning, how-

ever, soon brought him to himself, and convinced him of the futility of his project.

'Believe me, Henry,' she said, 'the trial will be as severely felt by me, as by yourself; (but the cup which our Father has given us, shall we not drink it?) yes, my dear friend, we will cheerfully resign the pleasing prospects of happiness our youthful imaginations have created, and consider, 'Whatever is, is right.' Time, that in its fleeting course brings tidings of anguish and distress, will, we must hope, bring also a palliative: and if, through the mercy of Providence, we are again permitted to unite our destinies, we shall, by having experienced the pangs of absence, be better able to estimate the value of each other's society. Duty and necessity now combine to hasten your departure from hence; let no other subject engross your thoughts but that of your excellent father. The conviction of having done

all in your power to procure the melancholy satisfaction of a last interview, will be a pleasing reflection, let the event terminate as it may. God bless you, my Henry! May Heaven direct your steps in safety to the place of your destination; and, when separated by distance, far from the presence of your friend, sometimes bestow a thought on the absent Mary.'

"So saying, she ran with hasty, but agitated steps to her room; and notwithstanding the entreating remonstrances of Mrs. Belmont, who could not help pitying the distress of Henry, she positively refused to see him again.

'Bid him recollect,' she said, 'that the voice of a dying parent calls, and does he hesitate to obey the mandate? Does he imagine that I have so little regard for him, as voluntarily to become a barrier between him and his duty? No, my dear friend, inclination must

give way, and Mary can, and will be resolute."

"Finding that all persuasions were unavailing, Mrs. Belmont returned to her desponding friend. He listened to the determination of Mary in silence; then lifting his hands and eyes to Heaven, as if invoking a divine blessing for her preservation, he rushed in speechless anguish from the house.

"Mary, from her window, saw him proceed with hurried steps to the bottom of the street, when an angle hid him from her view.

'He is gone then!' she exclaimed, 'gone, perhaps never to return!' And bursting into a violent flood of tears, she rested her head on the table, and sobbed bitterly.

"With him fled every spark of that philosophy which before had stimulated her to sacrifice the dearest wish of her heart to prudence and duty:

the endearing object that could inspire such exertion was no longer present, and fortitude forsook her.

"By Mrs. Belmont she was persuaded to remain that night in Russel Square; but the soothing balm of sleep was denied her, and listless and dejected, she repaired in the morning to her mother's house. To increase her distress, she was condemned to lose at once the society of both her friends, Miss Mansfield and Mrs. Belmont. The former immediately went to her brother, and the latter was summoned to attend the sick bed of a relation, who resided in the vicinity of Egham. This circumstance was most unfortunate for Mary; deprived of the consolatory balm of friendship, and ill calculated to endure the bitter reproaches of her mother and sister, she passed whole days in her apartment, spiritless, dejected, and alone.

"She received intelligence of Henry

Mansfield's safe arrival; but of his father he was unable to give any satisfactory account. Unconscious of any thing around, he still lingered in a state of such perfect insensibility, that the medical attendants gave no hope whatever of his recovery.

'To see him in so melancholy a situation,' he proceeded to say, 'is truly distressing. That intelligent countenance, whose benign expression we have together so frequently admired, now no longer beams with gladness at the approach of his son; or, with enquiring eye, demands the cause of his absence. His ideas are nought but one confused mass of incongruity; and as I gaze on his now vacant countenance, methinks the awful truth that, 'We are even as a vapour that appeareth but for a little time, and then vanisheth away,' strikes more forcibly on my mind than ever. Alas! Mary, what are we? What is our life but a dream, an empty

vapourous shadow! even the longest is almost as nothing.

'Yet short as the time of our earthly pilgrimage may be, it is the allotted period of our trial for eternity; and as such it is of infinite importance. That my excellent father will ever be restored to the enjoyment of his faculties cannot be expected, and ought not therefore to be desired. Painful as the decree may be, it is the duty of us mortals to bow with submission to the Divine will; ever remembering that that all-wise Being can better judge than ourselves what is most conducive to our spiritual welfare. In the present case I should be selfish, nay cruel, to wish for a prolongation of my father's life, knowing that his earthly career has been so spent as to give him the blessed assurance of a heavenly inheritance. The separation, come when it will, must bring with it afflicting and painful sensations: but, oh! what a consolation to the heart of an

affectionate child is it to know that his departed soul shall have taken its flight from this mortal state, only to be transplanted into the realms of eternal, immortal, never-ending bliss.'

"Such was the strain of holy enthusiasm that breathed throughout the letters of this amiable young man. They offered comfort to the heart of Mary, who, through the gloom of surrounding darkness, caught a gleam of hope that promised to cheer her future prospects and gild the remaining part of her life. About this period a visible change took place in the manners and conduct of Caroline, whose haughty demeanour gave place to one of mildness and affability.

"Mrs. Sullivan, who from constant exposure to the night air had caught repeated colds, now appeared extremely unwell, and not unfrequently felt herself obliged to decline accompanying her daughter to those resorts of

fashion which she had before so universally frequented. Such a restriction convinced Mary that her mother was in reality worse than she herself acknowledged; and every feeling of resentment vanishing from her pure breast on the conviction, she forgot all but the illness of a parent, and with affectionate solicitude tendered her services; but they were repulsed with scorn.

'The filial love of my daughter Caroline,' haughtily replied Mrs. Sullivan, 'will not permit her to absent herself when her mother requires assistance; therefore, if your offer is intended to convey a reproach to your sister, be assured that the venomous dart will fail to inflict the wound you aim at making, and that your proffered aid is as undesirable as unnecessary.'

"Without attempting to justify her intentions, Mary returned to her room. She was aware that the blind partiality of her mother would render such an

attempt useless, and she patiently waited the result. Day after day, Mrs. Sullivan grew visibly worse; a violent and incessant cough, attended with much fever, prevented repose either by night or day. Caroline, contrary to her prediction, pursued with more avidity than usual the dissolute enjoyments of the gay world. An indifferent enquiry of 'How are you,' was all the attention she bestowed on her mother, who, wilfully blind, still persisted in calling her by every endearing appellation that affection could dictate; while Mary, so deserving, yet so injured, was disregarded and contemned. Finding, however, that the tender and delicate attentions of a child were manifesly desirable for the invalid, Mary at length resolved to make a second attempt to render her services, though in a different manner.

"Cautioning the attendants, who were all too well acquainted with their mistress's unnatural disaffection for her

daughter, not to mention her name, she carefully, but secretly prepared a number of little niceties which Mr. Downes recommended. Whole nights did she spend in a remote corner of her mother's apartment, anxiously, but silently anticipating her every want, yet still not daring to discover herself. Several days passed on without working a favourable change: increasing symptoms of malady shewed themselves; and, at times, delirium was strongly pourtrayed in the conversation of the invalid. One night that she had been much more violent than usual, Mary, alarmed, went in search of her sister, who, to her astonishment, she found was not yet returned from Lady Louisa Baxter's, where she had spent the day.

'Ah!' exclaimed Mary, 'that woman will be the ruin of my sister!' and, sighing at the reflection, she turned to re-enter her mother's apartment. The voice of Caroline, who, in a whis-

per, was conversing with some person underneath, arrested her attention; but, superior to the contemptible act of listening, she immediately and loudly enquired if it were her sister. A slight confusion ensued, which was immediately succeeded by the sound of the street-door, and Caroline, looking agitated and surprised, came up stairs. 'What calls you up so much later than usual to-night?' she enquired, 'Is my mother worse?' 'She is indeed,' replied Mary, 'and I left her room for the sole purpose of calling you to her.' 'I cannot come, Mary; I cannot see her, at least not to-night,' wildly returned Caroline; but apparently recollecting herself, she assumed an air of more composure, adding, 'my presence can do no good, and I have a violent head-ache, therefore excuse me I entreat you.' 'I would not wish you to act contrary to your own inclination, Caroline; but at such a time I thought you would rather have

preferred being with our mother, who, I fear, is dangerously indisposed.' So saying, she bid her sister good night, and, with a heart torn with a variety of contending emotions, she resumed her station in the apartment of her mother. The morning found Mrs. Sullivan more composed; and Mary, feeling fatigued, withdrew to her room in order to seek a little repose. The first thing that attracted her attention was a letter that lay on her table. She hastily took it up, expecting to recognize the welcome hand-writing of Henry Mansfield, from whom she had not heard for some time; but, surprised and disappointed, she perceived it was from her sister. The contents ran thus:

'Dear Mary,

'Ere you receive this I shall be far from town. The amiable, the accomplished Mansfield, is the companion of my flight.

'I can guess your astonishment. Lady Louisa accompanies us.

'In great haste,

'Your affectionate CAROLINE.'

"The letter dropped from the trembling hand of Mary, and she sunk senseless on the floor.

"At length she revived; but painful recollection returned with every awakened sense, and she felt the misery of her situation with redoubled force. She gazed wildly around: the fatal letter lay at her feet. 'The amiable, the accomplished Mansfield, is the companion of my flight.' These direful words again struck her recoiling sight, and clasping her hands, she exclaimed, 'O God, to what am I born?' Then bursting into a violent flood of tears, she sunk again on the floor to indulge in the grateful effusion. Her surcharged breast heaved tumultuously, as in a state of desperation, she incoherently prayed

that Heaven would mercifully terminate her sufferings by the friendly hand of death. 'The world to me,' she said, 'is nought but a chaos of mingled grief and misery. On every side I encounter nothing but dissimulation and insincerity; and like the disconsolate mariner, who, weary of buffeting the storms of the tumultuous ocean, resigns himself in despair to its overwhelming influence, so I, worn out with persecution, and deprived of hope, seek refuge only in the dark and vaulted mausoleum of the grave, as a termination of my sorrows.' This monologue was interrupted by the entrance of a servant, who, absorbed in the intelligence she was about to relate, perceived not the distress of her young mistress, and eagerly said, 'Lady Louisa Baxter's servant has just called, Miss Mary, and he tells us that his mistress, with Miss Caroline and Mr. Mansfield, set off in a coach and four this morning for Dover.

Miss Caroline,' she added, 'has not been in bed to-night; and what makes me think that the report is true, is that Ellen, her own maid, is no where to be found, and I dare say she is gone with her.' 'Alas!' replied Mary, 'it is too true; I already know it. Leave me for mercy's sake, I cannot talk; but take care that my mother does not hear a syllable of it.' The injunction was scarcely uttered when another servant entering, exclaimed in wild and hurried accents, 'La, Miss Mary, you will never forgive me; I have done one of the most foolish things in the world: I thought that my mistress was asleep, and I went into her room to tell Winsborough how that Miss Caroline was eloped with Mr. Mansfield, and just as I had finished the story, to our utter astonishment, having heard every syllable I had said, she started off all in a minute, like one out of her mind, and I ran to tell you of it.'

"Not waiting to answer the voluble girl, Mary flew to the apartment of her mother, who, as Susan had represented, was indeed in a state of phrenzy. Without any other covering but a loose dressing-gown, in the depth of winter, after having been confined to her bed three or four weeks, did this unfortunate woman pace her room in a paroxism of mental agony not to be described. She tore her hair with frantic violence, called wildly on the name of Caroline, and implored her return; but on perceiving the approaching form of Mary, she looked towards her with the terrific glare of madness shooting from every feature, and exclaimed, 'Cease those triumphant glances, thou foul, hypocritical monster! This is thy work! But for you she never would have taken such a step; it is you that have destroyed my own, my darling Caroline; and not content, not yet satiated, thou seekest the destruction of thy mother!'

'Blind, unhappy infatuation!' returned Mary, in a tone of distraction and pity, 'to what will this fatal partiality lead you.' 'Avaunt from my sight, deceitful girl,' passionately raved Mrs. Sullivan; 'or, if determined to irritate me, receive the effects of my wrath,' she added, seizing a knife that accidentally lay on the table, and throwing it violently at her daughter. The aim was too sure; it unfortunately struck the innocent victim for whom it was intended, and laying her shoulder open, disclosed a hideous gash. The blood flowed in rapid profusion, and fainting, Mary fell to the ground, while the terrified attendants flew for assistance, unwarily leaving Mrs. Sullivan alone with her daughter. Shocked, alarmed at what she had done, maternal feeling at length preponderated, and throwing herself beside her daughter, she uttered the most piercing shrieks and lamentations.

'And shall I live,' she exclaimed, 'to witness thy expiring breath? Shall I, the unnatural parent, the inhuman murderer of more than mortal excellence, voluntarily drag on a miserable existence, when, by my own hand, I can relieve this torturing breast from the bitter pangs of self-condemnation? No! the instrument that lacerated thy gore-stained shoulder, my Mary, shall pierce the heart of thy unfortunate mother.' 'Hold, madam!' exclaimed Mr. Downes, who at this critical juncture happily entered and seized the dangerous implement. 'What would you do?' 'Any thing,' she replied, 'but live!' Then bursting into an hysteric laugh, she added, 'Do you not see she is dead; yes, quite dead; and it is I that have killed her! Poor soul! how pale, how white she looks! her eyes are shut for ever! But we will be buried in the same grave, my Mary.' 'My dear Mrs. Sullivan,' interrupted Mr. Downes, 'for mercy's

sake check the impetuosity of your feelings : they carry you quite beyond yourself. Let me entreat you to retire with me to another apartment.' This she so resolutely refused doing, that Mr. Downes, seeing the necessity of her removal, at length recurred to force; and, having placed proper attendants to observe her motions, he returned to Mary, who still lay in a state of perfect insensibility. This circumstance proved favourable to the execution of his operation, which being accomplished, he placed her in bed, and by the application of proper remedies succeeded in restoring signs of animation.

" She opened her languid eyes, and faintly asked, ' Where is my mother ?' ' She is safe—' ' But sadly lost to all sense of reason, I fear,' interrupted Mary; ' from this undutiful conduct of Caroline's, I anticipate the direst effects.' ' Think only on your own condition at present,' replied Mr. Downes;

'it is necessary you should remain perfectly still and quiet. I will go to your mother; and satisfy yourself with this assurance, that should there be any cause for alarm you shall not be kept ignorant of it.'

"He found Mrs. Sullivan seated on the ground; one hand hung listlessly at her side, while with the other she supported her head. On hearing the door open, she started, looked at Mr. Downes with a wild, unsettled air, and exclaimed, 'Cruel, barbarous man; but for you I should not now live to answer for the murder of my child!' 'Recollect, Mrs. Sullivan,' returned Mr. Downes, 'that but for my timely interference you must ere now have accounted to a higher than an earthly tribunal for the atrocious crime of self-destruction. Instead, therefore, of repining at so providential an escape, look up with feelings of gratitude and

remorse to that God whose anger you have so rashly provoked, and from whom you can scarce dare hope for pardon. But infinite in mercy as all bountiful in goodness, he, in the hour of danger, stretched his protecting arm to shield the innocent victim of unguarded passion; he stayed the hand that aimed the blow; he saved the life of your child.' 'The life of my child!' exclaimed Mrs. Sullivan, her countenance kindling with joyful surprise, while it still retained some expression of disbelief: 'Oh! my dear sir, let me once more hear the blissful assurance, once more give utterance to a hope that I dared not encourage.' 'The wound, though deep, is not, I am happy to say, fatal,' replied Mr. Downes. 'Your daughter underwent the operation better than I could have expected, and is now comparatively at ease. As the slightest agitation of mind, however,

would be prejudicial, and likely to retard her recovery, I hope I need not request you to avoid an interview.'

"The request was entirely lost on the individual to whom it was addressed. The joyful intelligence that her daughter lived was sufficient to overpower her weak frame, already torn by a thousand painful and violent apprehensions. She gazed for a few moments in wild and unmeaning astonishment. A livid paleness spread itself over her features; and exclaiming, 'My God, I thank thee!' all signs of animation became suspended, and she sunk into the arms of her attendants, who, in an inexpressible state of horror and confusion, seemed unable to lend the necessary assistance. Appeased, however, in some measure, by Mr. Downes' assurance that their mistress was only in a temporary stupor, they placed her on the bed, and administered restoratives, but they proved inefficacious; sometimes,

indeed, she would start, as it were, back to life, but it was only to relapse the next moment into a similar state of inanimation. Bleeding was at length resorted to; it produced the effect desired. She revived, opened her eyes, turned them hastily on every side, but spoke not a word. Several days elapsed; she positively refused all sustenance, and appeared resolutely determined to resist all attempts at conversation. To the enquiries of those around her she sometimes answered by a monosyllable, but always seemed averse to being disturbed. Sleep had not once closed her eyes or suspended the anguish of her mind. She appeared revolving some momentous subject. Mr. Downes at length became alarmed: he was aware that previous illness had greatly reduced his patient, and that this determination to reject all bodily support, would, if not counteracted, be productive of serious consequences.

He therefore one morning endeavoured to rouse her feelings by touching on the most affecting subjects. He spoke of her late husband, of her daughters; alternately he upbraided and compassionated; nor did he leave any means untried that he thought likely to produce emotion. The welcome tears rolled in quick succession from her eye, as he painted in moving colours the incidents that had of late occurred. Deep and smothered sighs stole from her labouring breast as he dwelt on the excellencies of Mary, and the fortitude with which she bore her sufferings. Still she answered him not; but lifting her eyes, as if addressing an immortal power, she fervently and with much solemnity pronounced the following ejaculation: 'I will not suffer mine eyes to sleep, nor mine eyelids to slumber, neither the temples of my head to take rest, until I find out a place for

the temple of the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob."

"A gleam of radiant light instantly broke on the before apprehensive mind of Mr. Downes. He was himself a truly Christian character, was sincerely attached to the family, and many times had he regretted the want of religion in Mrs. Sullivan. With joy unspeakable, therefore, did he encourage the pleasing idea that her expression had given birth to. He felt convinced that the great work of salvation had taken effect on her mind, and with feelings of more perfect satisfaction than he had experienced for some days, he hastened to impart the pleasing intelligence to her daughter. 'The ways of Heaven are dark and intricate,' enthusiastically repeated Mary, as Mr. Downes communicated his sentiments, her pure soul exhibiting in every feature the sweet expression of piety, love, and gratitude. The silent tear dropt un-

bidden from her eye as she lifted up her heart to God, in a zealous strain of prayer and thanksgiving. 'O thou blessed Advocate,' she ejaculated, 'who livest to make intercession for those frail children of mortality, who sorrowfully and penitently turn unto thee, accept my weak but sincere acknowledgments for thy manifold goodness in redeeming another wanderer from the power and temptations of sin. O, thou who inhabitest eternity; thou to whom all nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; thou all-powerful to punish, ever-merciful to save, inexhaustible in goodness, irresistible in power, thy mercy extendeth over all things, for all are the works of thy hands.'

"Earnestly did she entreat permission to go to her mother; but for a few days, Mr. Downes, fearing the consequences, remained deaf to her en-

treaties. At length, finding that Mrs. Sullivan still seemed obstinately bent to deny herself the necessary food for subsistence, and perceiving that whenever the door opened she eagerly looked towards it, as if expecting some particular person's entrance, he imagined it might possibly be Mary she sought to behold, and therefore requested her to prepare for an interview.

" Accordingly she arose, and with the assistance of her attendants, (for from the loss of blood she still remained excessively weak,) proceeded with slow steps to her mother's apartment. On approaching the room, she heard a low but solemn voice repeating that beautiful passage in the twelfth chapter of Isaiah, 'Though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation: I will trust, and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is be-

come my salvation.' It was her mother. She beckoned for silence, but could only hear some faint inarticulate accents; and presently after, the sound entirely ceasing, she proceeded to enter.

"On hearing the door, Mrs. Sullivan sat up and opened the curtain. Recognising her daughter, she expanded her arms as if to embrace her; but before Mary could reach the bed she had again sunk on her pillow. 'Oh! it is too much! it is too much!' she articulated, 'indeed it is more than I can bear.' 'What, my beloved mother, is too much?' enquired Mary, 'Are you in pain?—Can I relieve the weight that oppresses you?' 'Here, here is my pain!' she replied, striking her breast forcibly; then covering her face with her hands, she added, 'The goodness of God is infinite—too infinite; it only increases the bitterness of my soul. Can such a sinner as I be deserving his notice? Oh! the conviction of my own unwor-

thiness makes every blessing a reproach, and probes the inmost recesses of my heart.' Then removing her hands, and looking earnestly at her daughter for a few moments, she as quickly replaced them, exclaiming, 'Take, O take her to thyself! such excellence can alone belong to thee!' 'In this trying hour, my dear mother,' replied Mary, 'let religion be your comfort and support. Think on the blessed assurance which the Gospel holds out to penitent sinners—'that joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, that need no repentance.' 'True, my child,' returned Mrs. Sullivan, 'the readiness of God to receive and pardon the penitent offender, is in the parable of the prodigal son clearly illustrated; but I am so ignorant of the blessed truths of religion, that reflection puzzles instead of satisfying my mind. You, by your excellent departed fa-

ther, (and here the starting tear expressed her emotion), were early instructed in the divine precepts of Christianity; while I disregarded the word of God, despised his commandments, and laboured only for the meat which perisheth. Become then, my Mary, the instructor of your mother; pour into her heart the balm of heavenly consolation, that before the present opportunity is past, she may redeem her mispent time, and recover that spiritual health and strength, which can alone insure her a blissful immortality.'

"To describe the feelings of our amiable heroine on hearing her mother's request, or to dwell on the delight with which she promised to comply with it, would be superfluous—with her character you are already acquainted. To a devout Christian nothing can give such true and heart-felt satisfaction as the return of a sinner to the ways of righteousness; because the true child

of God, arrayed in the glorious perfection of his Father, rejoices in any circumstance which is calculated to afford that Father delight. Thus did Mary feel. Many a time had she, with filial affection, shed the bitter tear of sorrow, when reflecting on the sinful life her mother led.

'But a few months since,' she thought, 'how different was her situation! Carried away by the stream of dissipation and sensuality, regardless of the stings of conscience; casting the fear of God behind her, and wholly taken up in the pursuit of temporal objects, she was running with headlong precipitation the broad and beaten road to destruction! But now how is the scene changed! Sanctified by the holy spirit of God; weaned from the world; and resting her hopes of happiness on the rock of Christ, she confidently relies on his precious promises, and exists, as it were, with Heaven in

her eye. She looks forward to death without fear or dismay; and rejoicing in the blessed change that has taken place in her heart, she is enabled to say, in answer to those expressive words, "Whoso findeth me, findeth life." "I, O Lord, have found thee; I have chosen that good part, which shall not be taken from me."

"Every succeeding day brought fresh cause for rejoicing. Mrs. Sullivan, her mind having derived comfort and repose from the spiritual conversation and cheering society of her daughter, hourly improved in bodily health. Of Caroline they had received no tidings. In a letter she had left addressed to her mother, she had named her intention of going immediately to the continent, but not a word had she said of returning, nor had she offered the slightest palliative for the manner in which she had left her home. The circumstance altogether appeared to Mary mysterious:

"She had, it was true, in the first moments of desperation, condemned Henry Mansfield as base and ungenerous, but reflection had, since that time, occasioned a complete reversal of sentiment. She now felt convinced that some deception had been practised on her; and that the name of Mansfield had been made use of from some sinister motive, probably from a desire of revenge; for as Lady Louisa Baxter was her sister's counsellor and confidential friend, she doubted not but that the whole transaction had been instigated by her, and that the weak, infatuated Caroline, had been duped and led away by the wily arts of her more experienced, but deceitful companion, who, well versed in the science of craft and intrigue, was she knew capable of effecting any scheme, however diabolical, that could possibly tend to forward her own interest. The only thing that caused her the slightest uneasiness was the

silence of Henry Mansfield. She had received but one letter from him since his departure, although she had written to him several times; but firmly relying on his sincerity, she would not allow herself for a moment to call his honour in question, generously conceiving that accident, or some untoward circumstance, prevented his writing. She carefully avoided ever mentioning the subject before her mother; but when alone, sad recollection often gave rise to moments of regret.

"One morning when Mrs. Sullivan and herself had been speaking of Caroline, the former said, 'While surrounded by gaiety, affluence, and prosperity, depend on it we shall see nothing of her; but when the bright sunshine is succeeded by the gloom of adversity, Caroline will recollect that she has a mother; and think me not weak or partial, my dear Mary, if I say that *that* mother shall not be sought in vain. Whatever

Caroline's faults may be, to my fatal indulgence they are owing. Had I used the proper authority of a parent, by repressing instead of encouraging her dissolute inclinations, all would yet have been well. I planted the vicious seed, and to God must I trust for its expungement.'

'May he in mercy answer your petition,' replied Mary; 'to clasp to my embrace a sister in heart as well as in name, would be to me a satisfaction greater than this world can offer. But the subject is painful, my dear mother, let us not enlarge upon it. To the great physician we will trust, he alone is able to heal the malady, and restore the soul to purity and health. But I have a request to make to you. Frequently when alone I have reflected on the sudden reversal of sentiment that took place in your heart, with feelings of awe, wonder, and astonishment; will you gratify me, by describing your sensations, when

first the regeneration began to work in your breast?'

'Willingly,' replied Mrs. Sullivan. 'When Mr. Downes returned from dressing your wound, and informed me, contrary to my expectations, that you still lived, that moment was the commencement of a new era in my existence. A bright gleam that then seemed more than mortal, broke suddenly on my mind. How fortunate, thought I, that the knife did not penetrate too far! and this reflection was immediately succeeded by the interrogation of "Who stayed my hand?" God, the protector of the innocent! I mentally exclaimed; and forcible indeed was the impression that that reply made on my before estranged and sinful heart: it has never been erased, and those moments I consider were the most solemn, the most important of my life: may they as such be ever remembered, and at the hour of death, may I be enabled to look

back on them with gratitude and adoration. From that time reflection succeeded reflection. Portions of scripture, that without considering their import, I had committed to memory, merely from having so often heard them repeated by your father, were now recalled, and every word dwelt on with deep and serious attention. I now began to feel that I had lived "without God and without hope in the world," that I had sold my soul for the mammon of unrighteousness: that I had laboured only for the meat which perisheth: and that Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell, had alike been forgotten, and disregarded. Oh! what pangs of self-condemnation did this conviction cause me! Alas! I exclaimed, It is appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment.' Where then shall I appear? Shall I awake from the sleep of death, amongst those accursed spirits that are

lost for ever? Oh! the agonies of conscience! The overwhelming fears of that moment are not to be described! never to be forgotten! They were however succeeded by more consolatory ideas. The parable of the prodigal son became the subject of my meditations. I thought that my situation resembled his, except indeed that my faults had been more heinous. Some palliative for him might have been offered in plea of his inexperience. The thoughtlessness of youth might have led him astray; but I had reached the age of maturity. I was the mother of a family, consequently the duties that devolved on me to perform, were doubly sacred, because in neglecting my own salvation I promoted the ruin of my children.' Here over the fate of *her prodigal child* she shed the remorseful tear of bitter repentance, and was for some time unable to proceed; at length she continued,—' The com-

fortable assurance, my dear Mary, that you repeated to me on our first interview, so expressive of the readiness of God to receive and pardon the penitent offender, encouraged me. True, I had been a guilty, deluded sinner. I had spent my life in fatal security, in constant pursuit of the follies and vanities of the world, without once casting a thought on the awful subject of an hereafter. So far from preparing for death, I had never given it a moment's consideration; but now the fearful reality burst on my mind, and brought with it the most insupportable terrors. In the midst however of these distressing thoughts a ray of hope penetrated, that, notwithstanding my guilt, afforded consolation. I will flee for refuge to the throne of mercy! I ejaculated; I will acknowledge my transgressions; I will confess the error of my ways; I will plead the gracious promises of God in Christ Jesus; and will solicit the suffering

of his atoning sacrifice for all my sins. Having made this determination, I felt more composed. Sometimes indeed doubts would arise, and a conviction of my great unworthiness would discourage and stop my prayers; but hope revived, and the cherished idea of being eventually heard, stimulated me to fresh exertion. 'Cast down, but not destroyed.' To the Lord I prayed, and he has listened to the voice of my petition. Yes, my dear Mary, his tender mercies and loving kindness, have indeed displayed themselves, for when yet a great way off, he ran, fell on my neck, and kissed me. Forgetting all resentment, he only rejoices in the return of a prodigal child from the ways of sin and uncleanness. Seeing my heart broken, and contrite, self-condemned, and repentant, all feelings of anger are forgotten; he offers to my acceptance the glorious blessings and privileges of the Gospel,

and my sins and iniquities he remembers no more.'

"Having concluded this pathetic delineation of her feelings, Mrs. Sullivan rather overcome by the exertion, retired to seek the refreshing balm of sleep; and Mary, as pensively she sat, watching the peaceful slumbers of her mother, meditated, with feelings of pious gratitude, on the wonderful manner in which the Lord bringeth good out of evil.

"On Mrs. Sullivan's restoration to health, congratulatory cards poured in from every quarter. She had however formed a resolution to resign all communication with her former associates; the busy theatre of the fashionable world was no longer calculated to afford her pleasure, and she cheerfully submitted the enjoyment of it to those who could better relish its sensualities. The more effectually to execute this design, Mary strongly recommended the relinquishment of her town residence, and pro-

posed taking some pretty retired cottage in the neighbourhood. Recollectlng, however, that Mrs. Belmont still remained in the vicinity of Egham, and having heard her say much of the beauty of the spot, she expressed an anxious wish to repair thither; while Mrs. Sullivan, desirous only of gratifying her daughter, immediately acceded to the proposition.

"In pursuance of this arrangement, Mary lost no time in addressing her friend on the subject, who, mutually pleased at the prospect of a union with one for whom she felt so warm an affection, diligently set about making preparations for their reception.

"The relative with whom Mrs. Belmont was staying, resided about half a mile from the village. Situated near it was a small, but commodious habitation, which was fortunately unoccupied. Its local position was picturesque, and commanded an agreeable view of the sur-

rounding country. Mrs. Belmont thought it desirable, and exactly suited to the taste of her friends, who having commissioned her to consult her own opinion, she hesitated not to take it for a short term. This communication being made to Mrs. Sullivan and her daughter, they immediately set off for Surry. The scene on their arrival at Egham, presented a delightful aspect—

"God's bounty shone in autumn unconfined,
"And spread a common feast for all that lives."

"Here was seen the fruitful ear, waving its yellow head in rich profusion. At a little distance, where the seed had been earlier planted, the busy reaper plied his well sharpened sickle, and with measured strokes, laid the ripened blade in regular succession: while in other parts of the surrounding country, were scattered the indigent peasantry, who diligently gleaned the scanty remnant of the harvest, to pro-

cure themselves the simple rarity of a wheaten loaf. It was a pleasing contrast to the smoky atmosphere and confined scenery of the metropolis, and much did our friends enjoy the change.

"On their arrival they found Mrs. Belmont, with friendly attention, waiting to receive them. Through her kindness every thing had been prepared for their accommodation, with the strictest care and nicety. They felt truly grateful for this proof of her regard, and gratified beyond measure by all that surrounded them, they eagerly entered into immediate possession.

"The fine wholesome air of the country proved of infinite service to Mrs. Sullivan. Her health daily improved, and she was soon enabled to walk long distances without fatigue. Returning one evening, with her daughter, from a short ramble, they went up stairs to disrobe themselves of their

walking apparel, when a servant following Mary, delivered to her a card, saying, 'A gentleman, Ma'am, left this at the door not ten minutes since; he enquired for you, and finding you were not at home, he ordered me to deliver it as soon as you returned.—He also bid me say, that he should call again in an hour's time.'

"The card bore the name of a very dear friend—it was Henry Mansfield's! and, surprised and astonished, Mary immediately went to communicate his arrival to her mother, and at the same time mildly enquired, if she should have any objection to receive him at her house.

"The countenance of Mrs. Sullivan on hearing his name evinced a momentary change; she thought of the illiberal treatment he had received from her, and with tears in her eyes, she said, 'Far from feeling any repugnance, my dear Mary, I shall be delighted to have an opportunity of apologizing for my

former conduct towards him, and of convincing him by present attention, how much I regret the past, and how anxious I am to redeem his good opinion.' 'Let me, my dear mother, embrace this moment,' (interrupted Mary,) 'to request you will tell me who the Mr. Mansfield was that accompanied Caroline in her flight; it is a subject that has frequently puzzled me; for although I acknowledge myself to blame, in having suspected for a moment the sincerity of Henry, still his long protracted silence has at times given rise to unpleasant surmises.'

'What!' asked Mrs. Sullivan, 'did you imagine that Caroline's unprincipled companion and Henry Mansfield were one? Oh, Mary, how greatly have you wronged him; but why did you not before impart your sentiments to me? I concluded, from never having heard you mention the subject, that as well as myself, you were ac-

quainted with every particular concerning it.'

"Knowing that to spare her mother's feelings had been the cause of her silence, Mary hesitated to reply, and Mrs. Sullivan proceeded.

'Mr. George and Henry Mansfield are cousins, the former being the eldest brother's son. In order to give you an insight into his character, I will recapitulate as briefly as possible, the incidents of his history. They were related to me by Lady Louisa Baxter, who then avowed the greatest abhorence of him: whether any thing has since occurred to alter her opinion I cannot say, but of this I feel confident, that but for her Caroline would never have fallen a prey to his arts. He was married about six years since, to the only daughter and heiress of Sir John Mendip, of Great Marlow, Buckinghamshire. The meeting between these young people was accidental, and

rather singular. As Sir John was one day driving an open carriage from High Wycombe to Marlow, his horses became restive. How the accident occurred I cannot exactly relate, suffice it say, that at the moment, Mr. George Mansfield, who was also travelling that way, came to the spot, he found Sir John on the ground, in a state of insensibility.

'Although the gentlemen were not personally known to each other, Mr. Mansfield having been in the habit of visiting in the neighbourhood, was aware who Sir John was, and where he resided, he therefore assisted him into his own gig, and conveyed him to Marlow. This circumstance of course procured him an introduction to the family. His person was handsome and agreeable, and his manners those of the polished gentleman. Under a particularly attractive exterior therefore, he was well able to conceal the subtilty of his heart.

'Young, and inexperienced, poor Ellen Mendip was caught by the alluring bait. Conceiving every heart as pure and unsullied as her own, she listened with confidence to his solemn protestations, and innocently believed, in uniting herself to George Mansfield, she should be the happiest, the most enviable of women.

'Poor deluded girl, how early were her hopes blighted, how short-lived, how imaginary was the sun-shine of her life! Sir John was not a man of penetration, and in this case he was completely deceived. Grateful for the benefit afforded to him by Mr. Mansfield, and duped as was his daughter by the mask of pretended virtue he so ably assumed, a suspicion of the truth was far from his mind. To promote the welfare of his daughter was the dearest wish of his heart; her happiness his sole and only concern. He idolized

her with more than a father's fondness, for having lost his wife, she now remained the sole prop of his existence.

'Fortune was to him of no consideration, he was enabled to provide liberally for both his child and her husband, and having therefore ascertained the respectability of Mr. Mansfield's connections, he hesitated no longer to retard the celebration of their nuptials. After having taken a short tour and spent a few months in London, it was agreed that they should return and settle at Marlow.

'Dreaming of nought but felicity, unversed in the arts of mankind, and relying firmly on the affection of her husband, this poor innocent girl, then only eighteen years of age, was taken from a happy and peaceful home, to be led like a lamb to the slaughter. Having acquired by his marriage a great increase of fortune, the diabolical aim

of the wretched Mansfield was accomplished. The solemn engagement into which he had entered began to lose its due influence on his mind, and sincerely did he wish himself disengaged from its bonds. Thus, careless of the vow, which in the presence of his God he had so recently promised to fulfil, did this faithless, abandoned profligate, squander his fortune at the gaming table, or in the indulgence of still more licentious passions, while at the same time, so regardless was he of the feelings of his wife, that without the slightest apology he daily introduced at his table, company whose presence was sufficient to shock and disgust any woman of delicacy. Even the timid Ellen could not silently endure this bold attack on her modesty: she mildly remonstrated, but it was of no avail; all the compensation she received, was virulent abuse. Likely to become a mother, she however

resolved to bear with his ill-treatment until after her confinement, trusting to that event as likely to produce a favourable alteration in his conduct.

'At length she gave birth to a son, and as in his infant features she traced a strong resemblance to her husband, who, notwithstanding his unjust treatment of her, she still fondly loved, how bitter was the tear, how deep the sigh she heaved, sadly reflecting that *that* infant, now so innocent and guileless, would probably be reared in the nursery of vice and wickedness, by him whose duty it was to plant the seeds of virtue and religion. For this apprehension however there was no real cause.

'Mr. Mansfield considering his child an additional barrier to the enjoyment of his abominable, extravagant pursuits, became more indifferent than ever; nay, he sometimes passed several

days together without seeing or even enquiring for his wife, who cut down like a flower, by an untimely stroke, in the first bloom of her youth, pined and languished in hopeless misery.

'About this period, Sir John Mendip, fancying his daughter's letters breathed an unusual strain of depression and grief, and wondering at Mr. Mansfield's silence respecting their purposed return to Marlow, arrived without any previous apprisal at London. His sudden and unexpected appearance caused no little revolution in the affairs of Mr. Mansfield, who at the moment Sir John entered, was calumniating and upbraiding Ellen with his usual malignity. Her pale and dejected appearance, added to this circumstance, roused in her father's breast the most painful suspicions. He questioned his daughter with strict scrutiny, who, unused to deception, confessed

the real cause of her distress. Hurt and indignant, Sir John took the earliest opportunity of demanding of Mr. Mansfield the cause of such unwarrantable treatment; but lost to all sense of respect, and finding dissimulation fruitless, this wretched man, boldly and insolently averred, that he had never regarded his wife with any sentiment of affection, and that the less he saw of her the better. Such a confession immediately decided Sir John as to the steps he should pursue, he, therefore, without hesitation, effected a separation, and heart-broken, returned with his unfortunate daughter and her infant son, to Marlow.

'What afterwards became of her I never heard, nor do I know where the detested Mansfield afterwards resided; be that as it may, he arrived in town just as I was taken ill. I met him once at Lady Louisa Baxter's, and perceived that he paid particular attention to C-

roline, but accustomed to see her admired by strangers, I gave it not a moment's thought, concluding from what I had heard Lady Louisa say of her cousin, that he would not be frequently admitted into her circles.

'Little did I suspect that my poor child was destined to become the second victim of this villainous, unprincipled seducer; for, alas! her being legally united is doubtful. 'What do you say,' exclaimed Mary, 'is it possible that Caroline can have so dishonoured herself? Indeed, indeed, I cannot credit it!' 'God grant that it is not so,' ejaculated Mrs. Sullivan, 'but if such are your feelings, my dear Mary, in pity conceive what must be those of a mother, whose indulgent partiality caused her ruin; but I deserve all, and ten thousand times more than is inflicted on me. Oh! that I had never seen that base, hypocritical Lady Louisa, for though too late, I am now convinced,

that equally void of principle and humanity, she would shrink at nothing that design or malice could accomplish.'

" At this instant, a ring at the door, announced some person's arrival, and the servant coming up-stairs, informed Mary that a gentleman wished to see her. With a beating heart, but endeavouring to assume an air of composure, she descended to the drawing-room, where, as she expected, Henry Mansfiield waited her appearance. As may be supposed after so long a separation, and under existing circumstances, the meeting between them was truly affecting. To enter into a detail of their conversation, would be only a repetition of what has already been related; suffice it to say, that before they parted a mutual eclaircissement took place. With regard to their epistolary correspondence, each having regularly written, had been alike imposed on, and the

final conclusion they arrived at, after various conjectures was, that Caroline, or her companions, had, from some clandestine motive, suppressed their letters. Too happy however in the enjoyment of a mutual reconciliation, they expelled all intrusive or unpleasant ideas. Every circumstance that had occured, was recalled, and recounted with accuracy. Henry, as he related the melancholy event of his respected father's death, evinced much feeling.

'From the commencement of his attack,' he said, 'no return of faculty took place; his last moments were not irradiated by any transient gleams of reason; but Heaven willed the decree, and for me to murmur at, or dispute it, would be profaning the holy will of God.'

"Over the errors of the unfortunate Caroline, he sincerely lamented, and with that humanity so interwoven in

his nature, and so conspicuous in all his actions, he proposed writing to Mr. George Mansfield's friends, and endeavouring to discover the place of his retreat. But all efforts of the kind proved unavailing, no one appeared to know, or to wish to know any thing of him, he had entirely forfeited the good opinion of his family, who, excepting himself, were respectable members of society. They had long resigned all hopes of reformation in him, consequently expressed no surprise at this fresh instance of his depravity. Mrs. Sullivan was therefore obliged, though reluctantly, to give up the pleasing hopes she had anticipated from Henry's enquiries, and submit to time, which reveals the most hidden mysteries, for a disclosure.

"Time, that like the destructive whirlpool, bears in its rapid circumvolution, all that attempts to impede its progress, now glided swiftly by, un-

heeded by our happy friends. Their hearts, the seat of peace and tranquillity, admitted no idea that could interrupt their felicity, or disturb the quiet that surrounded them.

"Thus, forgetful and unoccupied, would they probably have continued, had not a circumstance occurred to rouse Henry from his state of inaction. His principal estate, and that, whereon was situated the old family residence, lay in Worcestershire, on the banks of the Severn, near the beautiful vale of Evesham. It was of considerable extent, but since the death of Mrs. Mansfield had been much deserted. His tenantry therefore, having heard of their late master's death, now became clamourous for Henry's return, and sent many entreating messages to that effect. Conscious that he was in duty bound to comply with so reasonable a request, he imparted his sentiments to Mary, and earnestly begged

her to hasten a union, to which there now no longer remained any reasonable barrier. The arguments he enforced were too strong to be resisted; and Mary, fully relying on the purity of his principles, and the sincerity of his affection, pledged her word to become his wife at no very distant period.

"Change of air and scenes she trusted would be beneficial to her mother, who, since the failure of Henry's attempt to discover the abode of Caroline, had visibly declined. It had long been mutually agreed that she should reside with them, and the eventful moment being at length arrived, the marriage was solemnized at Egham, from which place they immediately departed, though not without a pang, for amidst the general joy, one circumstance occurred to damp their felicity. It was the necessity of parting with Mrs. Belmont, from whom Mary had received such indubitable marks of regard, and

from whose kind and affectionate sympathy, she had derived a soothing palliative under many severe trials. The separation however was unavoidable, and earnestly recommending each other to the care and mercy of Providence, they bid a long and painful adieu.

" On approaching their future residence, an affecting scene awaited their reception. The tenantry, with their wives and children, had ranged themselves at the precincts of the park that led to the mansion, and hailed their arrival with every possible demonstration of joy. Loud acclamations rent the air, and the village bells merrily rung their enlivening peal.

"Although Henry felt extremely gratified by this affectionate display of sentiment from his dependants, still the memory of his father overcame every other sensation, and prevented his returning their effusions with the warmth he could have wished. 'Alas!' he

said, 'when last I left this land of my fathers, little did I expect, and less did I desire, to return sole master of it, if at the expence of such a loss as I have experienced in the death of so tender, so affectionate a parent.' And, as he conducted his lovely wife, whose eye was moistened by the tear of sympathy, over the different apartments, where every object brought recollection more forcibly to view, his distress became so great as to oblige him to seek the privacy of retirement. Full employment however soon tended to dissipate these affecting ideas.

"Mary, ever ready to exercise benevolence, occupied herself in selecting fit objects of charity, whom she relieved; and, as might be expected, soon became the friend of the needy, and benefactress of the destitute.

"Amidst so many surrounding blessings, your conclusion, I doubt not, is, that Mary must have been the happiest

of the happy, but indeed it was not the case. As I have before observed, temporal happiness is not without alloy; thus it was with our heroine. She daily discovered new cause for alarm in respect to her mother, whose malady visibly increased. Medicine availed not, for a broken heart who can heal; and though Mrs. Sullivan rarely spoke of Caroline, still it was evident to perceive the anguish of mind under which she laboured. As however her body decayed, and seemed returning to the earth from whence it came, her soul received new and additional strength. She felt her declining state, and far from looking forward to the grave with gloom and terror, she had long taught herself to anticipate beyond it a haven of eternal rest. At length the awful moment arrived, in which her nature was called on to resign its sway: she exchanged the robes of corruption for those of incorruption, the vesture of

mortality for one of immortality: but her soul disembodied from its earthly tabernacle, now cold in death, flitted to the mansions of the redeemed, to the regions of eternal love.

"Shortly after this melancholy incident, Mary was confined of twins, a boy and a girl, neither of whom however hailed the light of day. This was a trying disappointment both to herself and Henry. Like true Christians however, they submitted without a murmur to the dispensation of Providence, wisely considering that 'The lot is cast into the lap, but that the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.' At the expiration of a twelvemonth, she gave birth to another girl, who soon became the delight of her doating parents.

"The little Marianne, inherited a great share of her aunt Caroline's personal beauty, but her disposition was mild and amiable. Time rolled on apace, she had reached the age of six

years, and was beginning to make a rapid progress in the different studies she pursued under her mother's instruction, when Mr. Mansfield, by way of change, proposed spending the summer months at Caermarthen, with Mr. Sullivan, Mary's uncle, who practised there as a physician, and who had repeatedly begged them to favor him with a visit.

"Though reluctant to quit the happy retirement of her home, Mary hesitated not to comply with the wishes of her husband, and in the lovely month of June they set out for the South of Wales. Nothing worthy notice escaped their observation. Not being restricted for time, they spent a few days in every town of note through which their route conducted them, and after a delightful journey, arrived at Caermarthen, about six weeks from the time they left Worcester.

"Not long after, as the family were one day assembled at dinner, Mr. Sul-

livan was called out, and almost immediately returned, looking very agitated, and holding a letter in his hand, which, when the cloth was removed, and the servants departed, he opened, and read aloud as follows.

"If you can feel any pity for the unfortunate, distressed Caroline, fly for mercy's sake to the place where the messenger that takes this will conduct you. Come alone.

Your wretched niece,
CAROLINE SULLIVAN."

"Astonishment for some time prevented the power of utterance, at length Mary exclaimed, 'Go to her, my dear uncle, I entreat you go, and tell her, that a sister, forgetting all that is past, longs to clasp her in the embrace of affection.' He did so, and after an absence of many hours, returned, looking dejected and heartless. Mary though

more anxious than ever, seeing the expression of her uncle's countenance, dreaded to hear the result of his visit. 'I am sorry,' he said, in answer to her enquiries, 'that it is not in my power to communicate pleasing intelligence; but alas! the scene I have to relate is sufficient to pierce the heart of a stranger with feelings of horror and distress, much more that of an affectionate sister. I will not however keep you in suspence. 'The messenger that brought Caroline's note, conducted me by unfrequented passages, to an obscure lodging in the lower part of the town. During our walk thither, he informed me, that his mother returning with some water from the well, had found the poor lady stretched on some stone steps apparently faint from want and fatigue; that she had kindly taken her into her house, and given her the best nourishment it afforded, which was some bread and milk; and that on recovering a little,

she had called for pen and ink, and had written the note he had brought to me.

'Such an account you may imagine prepared me for the worst; but on entering the hovel, believe me it far exceeded in misery any idea I had formed. One room, that scarcely admitted light, was the only abode of a woman, her husband, and three children! On some straw in the corner lay a form that I imagined was Caroline's; I approached nearer, and plainly discovered that my conjectures were right. Her emaciated countenance still retained strong traces of that beauty which has, alas! been her ruin. She looked at me sternly, and in an imperative voice demanded if I were alone? Having answered in the affirmative, she said, 'Am I not a poor unfortunate wretch? See to what that villain has reduced me!' and then starting into sudden phrenzy, she with the most bitter and dreadful curses, upbraided Provi-

dence for having permitted her to exist under such accumulated misery.

'Shocked and terrified beyond measure, to hear her use such blasphemous expressions, I could not resist speaking. 'Caroline,' I said, 'live and repent. Should that Providence who you so impiously upbraid, be provoked to grant your petition, where, oh! where, will your soul awake?'

'Perhaps it had been more prudent to have remained silent, for apparently displeased at what I had said, she bid me not consider her a methodist, for that she detested the puritanical set. She then informed me, though with many profane imprecations, that George Mansfield, to whom she had never been legally united, having been one day violently angry with her, had decamped with another mistress, and left her destitute of even the common necessaries of life. Her landlady she said, to whom he was deeply involved, fearful of never

getting her money, had turned her out of doors; and that considering me the only friend from whom she could hope to obtain relief, she had directed her route to Caermarthen on foot, 'for my mother and sister,' she added, 'shall never I am resolved know to what my folly has reduced me; rather would I die than be so humbled.' Thus, my dear Mary, you see to what lengths pride may lead us; such, alas! is the depravity of the human heart. I then informed Caroline of her mother's death; of all that she had suffered on her account; and also told her that you were here; representing to her at the same time, the extreme folly of encouraging such proud, unchristian-like sentiments under her present circumstances.

'To the first part of my communication, she unfeelingly paid not the slightest attention; but on hearing that you were with me, and that you would consequently be informed of her situation,

her passion exceeded all bounds; she uttered the most horrid imprecations, cursed the day that gave her birth, and vowed that the moment she saw you should be the last of her life. I implored her to be calm, but the more earnestly I entreated, the more violent she became, and having called in a medical man to remain with her during my absence, I returned here to satisfy your anxiety. If I am not greatly mistaken there will not long be any occasion for you to absent yourself. When I left her, phrenzy was fast circulating through her veins, and the distemper will, I doubt not, increase: should that be the case, she will not of course be conscious of any particular person's presence; and much I fear that her exhausted nature, already reduced to the last extremity, will sink under the weight of such excessive violence.'

"This distressing account pierced the heart of Mary with the most rending

anguish. She felt too surely that her uncle's conjectures proving correct, her sister would be hurried into eternity without time for thought or repentance. 'Alas!' she exclaimed in the bitterness of despair, 'should this night terminate her bodily sufferings, where will her guilty soul awake!' when all of this world shall have vanished from her sight, what will be the doom passed on her by the merciful Saviour of the world! 'For if the righteous' scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear.' She requested Mr. Sullivan would permit her to accompany him to her sister. 'Should she be reasonable, and conscious of my presence,' she said, 'I will immediately return home, but if otherwise, nothing shall prevail on me to leave her.'

"Fearing infection, Henry spared no argument to prevent his wife's exposing herself, but resolute in her determination she would not listen to him, and

consequently departed. They found Caroline raving in all the horror of desperation. The surgeon whom Mr. Sullivan had employed, together with one of the poor woman's sons, were exerting their utmost strength to detain her from rushing into the street. Inspired with more than mortal strength, by the violence of outrageous phrenzy, she attempted to burst from their hold, and vowed on them the most direful vengeance. Mary turned with horror from the scene. She implored the men to release her sister, which request being seconded by her uncle, they complied; and the poor maniac, imagining that to the strangers who had just entered she was indebted for her freedom, fell on her knees before her sister and uncle, kissed their hands, and lavished on them the most tender caresses. Thus calm and agitated by turns, she passed the night, but the morning did not bring any favorable change.

"Towards the following evening, Henry, full of anxiety for the fate of his beloved wife, entreated her to return home, and permit him to supply her place in watching by the unfortunate Caroline; but she was deaf to his persuasions; a secret foreboding that all would soon be over gave strength to her resolution, and she positively insisted on remaining. That night her sister expired! No gleam of reason enlightened her departing spirit: it fled its clayey tenement for ever; but on this awful subject I will not long reflect. Dark is the book of fate! hidden are the mysteries of God! In the records of Eternity are her actions enrolled; may they at the last, the tremendous day of judgment, obtain mercy.

"Having proceeded thus far with my narrative, I would willingly make a final pause, and spare you the relation of those painful events that follow; but in so doing the recital would be

imperfect, and my task incomplete. Let me then proceed. The rights of sepulchre were scarcely performed over the remains of the unfortunate Caroline, when symptoms of infection began to discover themselves in both Mary and her husband. The hectic flush, the unsettled air, the wild incoherent discourse, too strongly corroborated the fatal conviction, that in watching the last moments of the lost abandoned Caroline, this amiable pair had breathed the contagion of virulent disease. Although medical aid was instantly resorted to, it proved ineffectual, and the fifth day from that on which they were first taken ill, the amiable benevolent Henry breathed his last expiring sigh.

"Stung with remorse and pity for the widowed Mary, Mr. Sullivan, as he hung over her in speechless anguish to administer the appeasing lenitive, was almost prompted to wish, that Heaven would mercifully spare her the

knowledge of Henry's death, by terminating her existence. But God, who knows best what is conducive to the eternal welfare of his creatures, thought otherwise. True, Mary had already experienced a just share of worldly affliction, but "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Numerous are the texts of scripture that shew the merciful design of God, in punishing and trying with the rod of affliction those who have the seed of Christ's religion growing in their hearts. "As many as I love," says he, "I will rebuke and chasten." He loved Mary, he considered her as one, who, excepting in a single instance, feared and served him in the spirit of truth and love; but a divided heart was all she offered to his acceptance, and that did not suffice; he required the full and free obedience of the soul; he saw that she gave that heart to the creature which

was due only to the Creator, and therefore in the fulness of compassion and loving kindness, he chastened in mercy, lest soul and body should perish together.

"After a long deprivation of reason she recovered to a sense of the misery that awaited her. Her first desire was to see Henry; but being informed that he had also been severely attacked by the same fever with herself, and that it had greatly reduced him, she for a day or two was easily prevailed on to check the eagerness of her wishes. At length, however, finding her anxiety increase, she renewed her entreaties, and in the most piteous manner, implored permission to see him. 'If he is not sufficently able to come to me,' she said, 'surely I can go to him; and indeed, my dear uncle, the sight of one, whom my soul holds so dear, will do more towards my recovery, than either art or medicine can possibly effect.'

"This so affecting an appeal to his feelings decided Mr. Sullivan, and with as much tenderness and precaution as possible, he imparted to her the distressing intelligence. She heard it in melancholy silence, and then exclaimed, 'Happy, happy, Henry! thou then art gone for ever, and I alone am left to buffet the storms of this wearisome world.' 'Say not so, dear mamma,' cried Marianne, throwing herself on the bed, and embracing her mother affectionately; 'while Marianne lives you shall never be quite alone; for *indeed*, *indeed*, dear mamma, I will never leave you.' 'God bless and preserve thee, my child,' returned Mary, thoughtfully, for to him I now resign thee." "In the day of adversity," saith the Preacher, "consider." I, O Lord, will consider. Through the dark gloom that surrounds me, I plainly perceive thy chastening hand. Thou canst penetrate

into and espy the hidden weakness of the human heart; thou hast discovered mine; and in order to bring me nearer to thyself, is this affliction cast upon me. Give me then, O Lord, strength to bear it; and if a heart that has so long been improperly devoted to the service of an earthly creature, be still worth thy acceptance, purify and receive it, O Lord, my God.'

"It was long before Mary recovered the shock that her uncle's communication produced. In the season of her affliction, however, she cast her hope on the only true rock that can afford consolation; she trusted in the mercy of her Saviour, and proved in her conduct, the truth which God himself hath spoken, that "our light afflictions, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

"Sufficiently restored to bear a

little of exertion, she accompanied her uncle to the tomb of her husband, over which she shed the bitter tear of mournful anguish, but it was mingled with resignation; and frequently after did she make this hallowed spot the scene of many a pious reflection. It was on one of these occasions, that the accidental fall of the tile introduced her to the acquaintance of Mrs. Wallace, from whom she never afterwards separated. The similarity of their misfortunes, caused in the breasts of each a mutual sympathy that daily increased. When I knew them several years had witnessed their union, but time had effected no diminution of regard. If ever pure unreserved friendship reigned in the human heart, it was seated in the breasts of Mrs. Wallace and Mrs. Mansfield. Never can I forget the veneration that inspired me, as I first contemplated the happiness of that

angelic family. To witness the scene unmoved was impossible. Marianne and Emily, regarding each other with sisterly affection, seemed to exist only in the smiles and approbation of their mothers, who, mutually happy, virtuous, disinterested, and ready to die for each other's preservation, more nearly resembled, than any thing else I can possibly name, those eminently pleasing characters in holy writ, viz: David and Jonathan. A connection so perfect, yet so pure, is rarely to be met with in this treacherous, deceitful world; for powerful as was the sentiment that inspired them, it was one that promoted rather than excluded the holy worship of religion.

" There soul met soul, and kindred hearts were blent,
" But pure, and holy love, begat the sentiment:
" Friendship, the balm of grief, sweet consolation's pow'r,
" Sooth'd each intrusive thought, beguil'd each lonesome hour."

"May you, my dear children, in like amity with these our amiable friends, taste the joys of disinterested friendship; but while I thus paint the delightful sentiment, and so strongly recommend its enforcement, let me not neglect to inculcate caution in the choice of confidants. Young persons are too apt to be led away by a false and pleasing exterior. Happening, in their association with mankind, to meet a person of high natural endowments, brilliant accomplishments, or attractive manners, the external appearance affords them pleasure, and they look no further, 'till by implicitly confiding in the supposed friend, the deception is discovered when too late to remedy the evil. Such instances are common, but they are the natural cause of too easy a confidence in pretended friendship. Through life, therefore, let prudence in the choice of a friend be your guide,

and when, by long-tried experience, you have secured the affection of one who merits the sacred appellation, be faithful to her interests; be steady in your attachment;

"Nor hope to find a friend,
"But what has found a friend in thee."

FINIS.

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